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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 26 | Min 18 | Humidity 90% Generally cloudy sky with Light rain Sensex 85,706 | Nifty 26,202 | Gold 1,29,820 | Silver 1,85,000 | Dollar 89.46 | Euro 104.02 | GBP 118.26

CITY / PAGE 3

STUMPED

Trees cut, but stumps remain across city roads as Greater Bengaluru Authority Forest Department lacks personnel, machinery, and time to remove them

CITY / PAGE 3

DANGER AHEAD

2 pedestrian deaths and eight accidents this year at dangerous stretch due to illegal crossings, blind spots on median, and missing infra

As street vendors sell SIM cards without even the basic checks, chances of identity theft become common. Police officials say many of these are pre-registered or tampered using details found at any photocopy shop in town

CARD GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

If SIM card used for criminal activity, person under whose name it is registered to be in trouble

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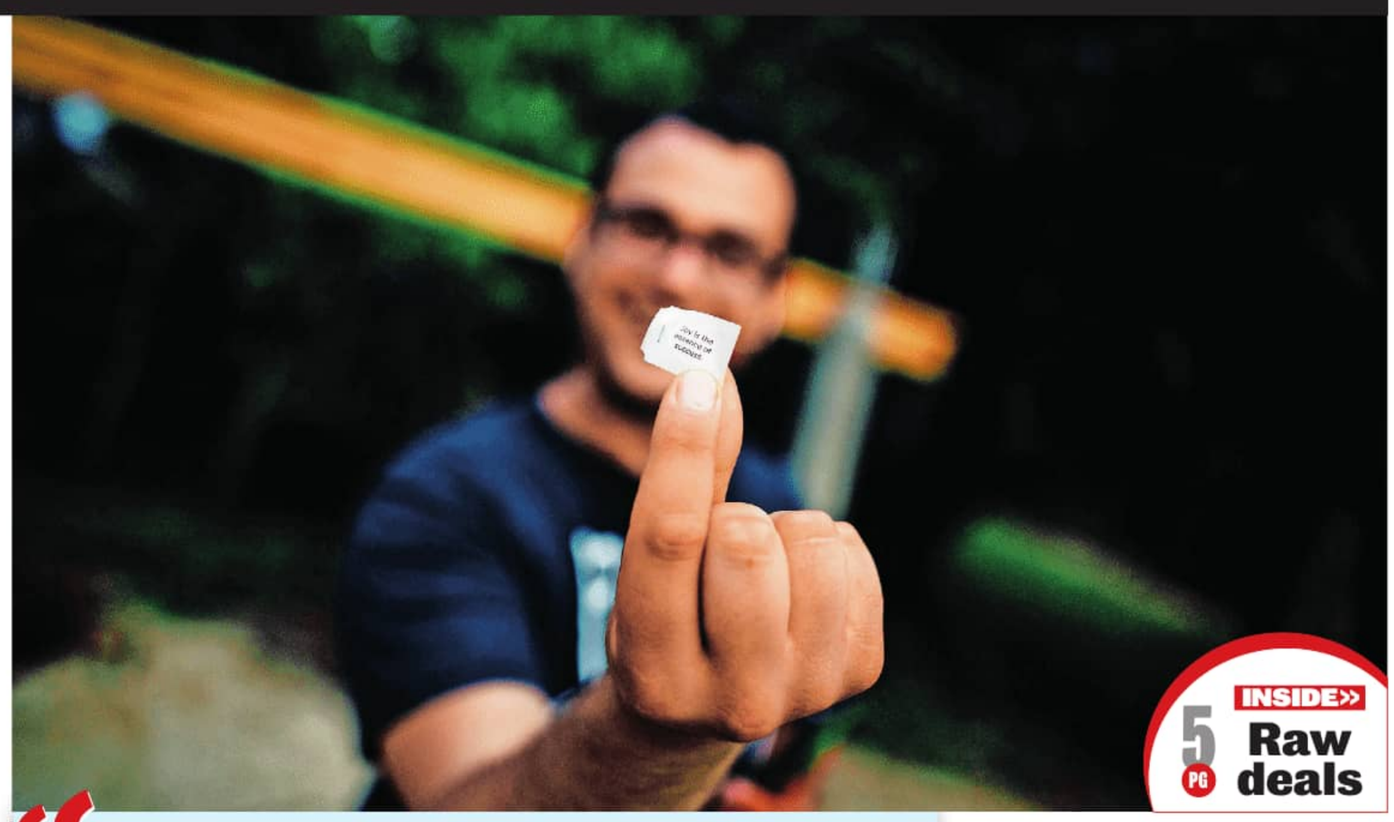

A growing number of cyber-crimes and identity-based fraud cases across the country are being traced back to unverified SIM cards illegally sold by street vendors. With digital financial fraud and other cyber-enabled crimes surging nationwide, the Department of Telecommunications has issued an advisory, stressing that full legal accountability for any SIM card now rests solely with its registered owner.

In Karnataka alone, 18 cases of SIM tampering have been officially registered this year. However, officials caution that the actual number is likely much higher, with several incidents going unreported or undetected. A police official explains, "Earlier, there was strict verification while purchasing a SIM card, but now advanced technology has brought both positive and negative changes. A street vendor, who sells SIM cards at cheaper rates, can lead to fraud, as the SIM cards sold on streets are usually pre-registered."

According to police officials, SIM tampering typically takes place in four stages, beginning with information gathering. The question is how do fraudsters obtain personal details to register SIM cards under someone else's name. A police official explains, "In many cases, this starts at everyday places like photocopy shops. When someone requests a photocopy of their Aadhaar card, some shops secretly make an extra copy. The retained copy basically data is then sold for around ₹500. Using the stolen Aadhaar details such as the victim's full name, address, date of birth, or answers to security questions, fraudsters register new SIM cards without the knowledge of the actual owner. Even to trace from which photo copy shop the data theft is happening is difficult as there are several such shops."

> **"A SIM card today is not just a phone connection. It is linked to banking, digital identity, and personal data. A misuse can destroy someone's financial life** – Police official

In limit

Previously, an individual could have up to 45 SIM cards linked to a single identity, but this limit has now been reduced to nine. However, many people are still unaware of this rule. "Fraudsters exploit this by purchasing SIM cards at low prices and using them for illegal activities, while the number remains officially registered in someone else's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11 »

INSIDE» 5 PG Raw deals

Once swanky, now forgotten

The space between the bus shelter and the PWD complex wall is completely trashed

Smart Bus Stop at KR Circle slowly slips into disrepair as authorities fail to maintain basic facilities

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It was supposed to be a modern bus shelter that would make Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) passengers, especially for women, feel welcome and at ease. But the condition of the Smart Bus Stop constructed at KR Circle today is such that nobody would want to enter the space. The Smart Bus Stop with sanitary napkin vending machines and more was constructed more than a year ago by a private company and handed over to the then Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP). It was the responsibility of the traffic engineering cell or jurisdictional engineer to maintain the bus shelter.

Much-publicised at the time of its launch, the Smart Bus Stop is set to join the list of neglected projects in the city. BMTC commuters and social activists are up in arms against the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC) authorities for not maintaining the shelter. "The sanitary pad vending machine was really helpful and was

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Community care

The Rotary Bengaluru South End, in association with the Vasantha Vallabha Nagar 1st Stage Residents Welfare and Cultural Association, will organise a free health camp on Sunday. **Where: VV Nagar, #129, 2nd Main Road, Subramanyapura Post, Vasanthapura; When: November 30, 9 am to 3 pm**

02 Data matters

TCA Anant, former UPSC member and ex-Chief Statistician of India, explores how numbers and narratives shape policymaking in India, examining metrics, measurement, and the stories behind the data. **Where: Bangalore International Centre, Indiranagar; When: December 1, 6:30 pm to 8 pm**

03 Timeless tunes

SwarTaal, Jagriti's annual celebration of Indian classical music and dance, brings Bangalore audiences face-to-face with centuries-old traditions. The festival features concerts by leading exponents, offering a platform to experience the depth and beauty of India's performing arts. **Where: Jagriti Theatre, Whitefield; When: December 12 to December 14, 7:30 pm onwards**

04 Cosmic glow

MAP Bengaluru launches a three-year exhibition exploring humanity through artworks by Gaitonde, Raza, and Arpita Singh, featuring interactive, tactile, and immersive experiences. **Where: Museum of Art & Photography (MAP), Ashok Nagar; When: January 17, 2026**

05 Hip-Hop fiesta

India's premier hip-hop duo, Seedhe Maut, celebrates a decade of music with an electrifying concert at Phoenix Marketcity. Joined by Calm and Encore ABJ, the night promises fearless lyrics, crowd anthems, and high-energy beats in a nationwide 15-city celebration. **Where: Backyard, Phoenix Marketcity; When: November 30, 6:30 pm onwards**

NGT slams authorities over deadly Hennagara Lake contamination

Citizens and NGOs highlight industrial effluent, sewage hazards; tribunal orders inspections, reports, and environmental compensation to prevent health crisis

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The southern bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has sued Jigani Town Municipal Corporation, Haragadda Gram Panchayat, and Hennagara Gram Panchayat over pollution in Hennagara Lake, a water body located near the Jigani Industrial Area. This follows an application filed by residents and non-governmental organisations in Masthenahalli in June, citing the alarming degradation of Hennagara Lake caused by unchecked industrial effluents and sewage discharges from the Jigani Industrial Area.

The application, filed by VrikshaMitra Foundation and Jal Thal Foundation, along with the residents, also emphasises that high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus in the lake have created conditions conducive to toxic algal blooms, which can release harmful toxins affecting both air and water quality.

Earlier, notices based on the application were sent to the Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board, the Karnataka Tank Conservation and Development Authority, and the Minor Irrigation Department.

The petition prompted the NGT to direct the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) to inspect the lake and submit a report on the violation, the action taken, and the mitigation measures implemented. The other respondents are also directed to file their respective reports detailing the measures undertaken by them to protect the lake, particularly in light of allegations that the surrounding industries are contributing to its pollution.

Locals, through the application, informed the green tribunal that during monsoon overflow, contaminated lake water risks spreading hazardous waste into surrounding fields and residential areas, which could potentially trigger a public health disaster. The applications also underlined that these aspects indicate a violation of the statutory provisions of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, the Environment (Protection) Act, and the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management and Transboundary Movement) Rules.

"The contaminated lake water is used by farmers for irrigating their crops. It is no wonder that vegetables have been found to contain high levels of heavy metals, raising concerns about long-term health crises. Hennagara Lake, along with other water bodies in the area receiving industrial effluent, should be cleaned by imposing environmental compensation on the industries as per the Polluter Pays principle," said a resident of the area. Locals say the need of the hour is lake fencing, buffer zone demarcation, and a sewage treatment plant.

HC quashes EO order, Shanth Kumar stays in KSCA race

Veteran sports administrator KN Shanth Kumar on Saturday expressed relief after the High Court declared his nomination papers for the post of Karnataka State Cricket Association president valid, setting aside an earlier decision by the Electoral Officer.

The Karnataka High Court order means former Indian pacer Venkatesh Prasad will now face competition for the KSCA president's post during elections scheduled for December 7. "There's only one way to view it. It's a welcome development. I'm very relieved that the court has recognised that I'm eligible. And now we're working towards preparing for the election," Shanth Kumar, a sports administrator for over three decades, told PTI.

KSCA elections resume; Shanth Kumar's nomination confirmed, stadium revival planned

Shanth Kumar, Director of The Printers Private Ltd, is a former president of the Karnataka Olympic Association and Karnataka Badminton Association. He is also a PTI Board director, a steward of the Bangalore Turf Club, and a council member of the Indian Golf Union. He was the non-playing captain of the Indian golf team at the 2002 Asian Games in Busan. The High Court directed the KSCA Electoral Officer to publish the candidate list and continue the election. Shanth Kumar's nomination now stands. Other contestants include Sujith Somasundar and Avinash Vaidya. Both panels aim to revive top-level cricket at M Chinnaswamy Stadium, inactive since the June 4 stampede. **— PTI**

Tech shift pushes VTU into fully online exam overhaul era

University launches secure digital system replacing manual question creation processes

In a major digital leap, Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) has introduced an online question paper preparation system, effective from the current academic year. The move marks a complete transition to paperless examinations — from paper setting to evaluation and results — bringing VTU closer to becoming a fully "digital university."

From paper to pixels: A decade of digital transition

While VTU has been conducting the online transmission of question papers, examinations, and results for nearly a decade, until now, question papers were prepared manually and physically at the university headquarters. Beginning this year, even that process has been digitised. "We are moving towards a paperless university. Question paper creation, password protection, and secure distribution will now happen entirely online," said Vice-Chancellor Prof S Vidyashankar.

AI and speed at the core of reforms

Post-examination results will now be generated within an hour, leveraging artificial intelligence to streamline evaluation and data processing. "We have already held preparatory sessions, procured 50 laptops, and are training staff in online paper creation and secure handling," Prof. Vidyashankar said, adding that the Exam Board will soon finalise the operational framework.

The initiative will cover all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, including BE, BTech, BPlan, BArch, MTech, MPlan, MArch, MSc (Engineering), PhD, and Integrated Dual Degrees.

He said that earlier, each paper-setting session required physical logistics — sealed envelopes, secure boxes, transport vehicles, and around 130 professors stationed at the university for manual supervision. "That system demanded time, manpower, and money. The new digital model eliminates these inefficiencies while reducing the risk of errors or paper leaks," the Vice-Chancellor noted. **— BMB**

VTU in numbers

- 3.2 lakh students under VTU's jurisdiction
- 215 engineering colleges and 25 schools of architecture
- 16 government colleges, 39 autonomous institutions, and 2 constituent colleges

Winter bite grips the city Women wear warm clothes as they walk on a cold winter morning after temperatures dip amid cold wave-like conditions in Bengaluru on Saturday

Roads hijacked by stubborn tree stumps

Citizens and environmentalists demand urgent removal and sapling plantation

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Tree stumps scattered across Bengaluru roads create hazards for pedestrians

Several roads in Bengaluru remain cluttered with fallen tree stumps, causing hazards for walkers. Activists urge the Forest Department to deploy manpower and machinery, drill stumps for new saplings, and restore greenery lost during monsoon

Tree stumps on several roads have become an eyesore and a hazard for pedestrians across the city. The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Forest Department lacks the personnel, machinery, and time to remove these stumps. While the GBA has been focused on plans to improve infrastructure, little effort has been made to clear tree stumps to enable pedestrians to walk on footpaths unhindered, or to plant saplings to replace trees lost during the monsoon.

Residents and environmentalists are urging the GBA Forest Department to take action by removing tree stumps and planting new saplings to maintain the city's greenery. They complain that Forest Department officials must pull up their socks to address this persistent problem. "I have already suggested to the Forest Department that they remove the stumps of fallen trees and plant saplings, but to no avail. I have personally planted saplings around various tree stumps, and these have grown well. Yet the Forest Department has done nothing to compensate for trees lost in the monsoon. There are around 20 tree stumps in Indiranagar and Domlur," said Dr Vijay Nishanth, an environmentalist.

Urging the department to plant saplings as soon as possible in areas where trees were lost, environmentalist Dattatraya T Devare added that officials need not spend unnecessary money or time removing tree stumps. "I suggest drilling the stumps to plant saplings instead of using heavy machinery. For instance, a tender coconut vendor planted two saplings in a tree stump on 100 Ft Road, Indiranagar," said Devare.

Noting that the two saplings on 100 Ft Road near KFC Junction looked attractive, resident Anand Ramachandran of Indiranagar said he was pleased to see the initiative by the tender coconut vendor.

Meanwhile, civic activist Vinod Jacob emphasised that every fallen tree must be replaced immediately. "The poor state of urban forestry demands urgent attention. Old stumps lining our roads, such as those on Nrupathunga Road, 100 Ft Road in Indiranagar, and other parts of Bengaluru, should make way for new avenue trees that provide shade, cleaner air, and a better walking experience for citizens, while restoring the city's green cover. The Forest Department needs more manpower and modern equipment to protect and nurture the city's most valuable assets: its trees and greenery," said Jacob.

However, the GBA Forest Department's Deputy Conservator of Forests stated that the department currently lacks the machinery to remove tree stumps. "Using earth-moving machinery to clear stumps from footpaths is time-consuming. The traffic police would object to such machines on the roads, as they would disrupt vehicular movement. I will submit a proposal to higher authorities to procure the necessary equipment to remove or grind stumps down to ground level," said the DCF.

Hotel worker murdered

A 33-year-old hotel staff member was found dead under mysterious circumstances near 1st Cross, Sarakki Road, within JP Nagar police station limits on Friday evening. The victim, identified as Tilak Singh, a resident of Nagavara and a native of Arunachal Pradesh, was discovered with his throat slit while sitting beneath a tree.

According to police, the incident came to light around 5:30 pm when a local resident spotted Singh motionless under the tree, with a knife lying beside him. The body was found seated near the footpath, with bloodstains visible on the surrounding pavement. The resident alerted police, a Scene of Crime Officer examined the site, and the body was sent for post-mortem.

Preliminary investigation showed Singh had come to JP Nagar to meet his brother. CCTV footage reportedly shows him walking alone toward the spot with a knife. Police found no other injuries, and the knife has been seized. While suicide is suspected, foul play has not been ruled out.

Officers are checking if anyone met Singh before the incident and awaiting forensic reports. A case of unnatural death has been registered, and JP Nagar police continue to investigate. **–BMB**

Tall promises end in nightmare

A woman filed a complaint accusing Shivakumar Nagara Navile, who claimed to be President of the Karnataka Press Club and organiser of international Kannada events, of cheating her out of over 20.18 lakh with false promises of prestigious positions and event roles. Govindarajanagar police arrested him at Bengaluru International Airport minutes before he tried to fly to Oman for a programme.

The complainant, Meenakshi B, said Shivakumar deceived her over a year, initially taking 11,000 in October 2023 for promised posts. Meenakshi claims Shivakumar has multiple past cheating cases. He continued demanding money under various pretexts, including event arrangements in Singapore, with amounts ranging from 20,000 to 10 lakh, some from loans and pledged gold. After the event, he stopped responding and allegedly threatened her. Police have registered a case and begun an investigation. **–BMB**

Kottigepalya junction death trap: Pedestrians risk lives daily

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Danger mounts at Kottigepalya bus stop as absent HRPC, skywalk, and signals leave commuters exposed to fast vehicles and hidden hazards

A stretch near the Kottigepalya bus stop, between Srigandhada Kaval Junction and Sumanahalli Junction, has become a danger zone, with police linking two pedestrian deaths and eight accidents this year to illegal crossings, blind spots on the elevated median, and missing pedestrian infrastructure. Officials say the problem has worsened after roadworks created vacant gaps that put two-wheelers and pedestrians at risk when crossing the busy arterial road.

High-speed hazard

The area around the Kottigepalya bus stop has become increasingly hazardous for pedestrians, who are forced to cross the busy corridor without a skywalk, High-Rise Pedestrian Crossing (HRPC), zebra crossing, or pedestrian signal. With no designated facility to guide them, people attempt to navigate the road immediately after alighting from buses, often unaware of how fast vehicles approach from both junctions.

The elevated median, built only to divide the carriageways, has trees planted on a raised base that block motorists' visibility. As pedestrians step out from behind these trees, they become invisible to drivers until the last moment. This blind spot has directly contributed to multiple tragedies, including the recent deaths of a woman and a 24-year-old man.

Police say the danger at this stretch is a structural hazard, not pedestrian recklessness. Trees on the median and gaps from resurfacing create blind spots, making pedestrians invisible to drivers. Many victims, new to the city, are unaware of fast-moving vehicles—especially bikes. The risk is highest near the bus stop, where commuters try to cross without any safe, engineered facility.

Infrastructure gap

The stretch lacks basic pedestrian infrastructure: no skywalk, zebra crossing, pedestrian signal, or any designated safe crossing point. A skywalk was originally proposed for this location but was later shifted to Sumanahalli, where it is now primarily used for display banners, leaving the Kottigepalya junction without any alternative crossing facility.

When the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (now GBA) was approached earlier, officials said the median and its structure fell under their "beautification" works. HRPC elements that once guided pedestrian movement were removed during new road construction, rain damage, trimming, and resurfacing. This has left large openings along the median.

Gaps in the median create predictable risks, with speeding two-wheelers and pedestrians crossing from all sides. Many victims are new to the city and unaware of fast traffic. Barricades have been repeatedly installed but are often ignored. Police say reinstating HRPCs and proper funnelling would slow vehicles and make crossings safer. Now designated a 'danger zone', Kottigepalya awaits urgent engineering fixes. The GBA West Commissioner has inspected the site, while temporary barbed wire prevents unsafe crossings.

Notification errors expose cracks in governance clarity

Confusion between GBA and GBDA causing widespread administrative challenges, impacting village jurisdiction, official notifications, and creating uncertainty across Greater Bengaluru governance and suburban planning operations

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A major naming confusion between two newly formed authorities — the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and the Greater Bengaluru Development Authority (GBDA) — is sparking widespread uncertainty, with the chaos even finding its way into government notifications. Both bodies differ only by the word "Development," leading to repeated mix-ups in official orders. In a notification issued on November 24 under the Governor's name, the Urban Development Department referred to both "GBDA" and "GBA," leaving officials and stakeholders puzzled.

Jurisdiction confusion

According to the notification, eight villages under Kasaba Hobli in Kanakapura taluk have been removed from the Kanakapura Local Planning Area and added to the "Greater Bengaluru Local Planning Area." This implies the villages now fall under the GBA. However, officials clarify that it should have read "Greater Bengaluru Development Local Planning Area," suggesting that the intended jurisdiction was GBDA, not GBA.

More contradictory orders

The same notification adds eight villages from Uttarahalli Hobli in Bengaluru South taluk to the "Greater Bengaluru Development Local Planning Area." This raises another question: how can areas from Bengaluru Urban district be included in a planning area linked to Bengaluru South district? Even the department's under-secretaries reportedly do not have convincing answers. Officials said that because GBA and GBDA have nearly identical names, typing errors occur and the orders will be reviewed.

Legal ambiguity

The Greater Bengaluru Governance Act, 2024 allows areas outside Bengaluru Urban — including Bengaluru South and Bengaluru Rural districts — to be included within the Greater Bengaluru jurisdiction if notified by the government. Officials warn that if such classifications are incorrect even in government notifications, future implementation will suffer. They also admit that GBDA areas may gradually move under GBA in the future, increasing the chances of continued confusion. Senior officials recommend renaming the bodies to avoid recurring administrative errors.

Renaming authorities suggested to reduce future administrative errors

According to the notification, eight villages under Kasaba Hobli in Kanakapura taluk have been removed from the Kanakapura Local Planning Area and added to the "Greater Bengaluru Local Planning Area"

Suburban mandate

To reduce population pressure on Bengaluru, the former Bidadi Development Authority was renamed as the Greater Bengaluru Development Authority. Its mandate is to develop six major suburban nodes — Devanahalli, Nelamangala, Hoskote, Doddaballapur, Magadi and Bidadi. The Karnataka Cabinet approved the "Greater Bengaluru Integrated Suburban Development Plan" under Section 15(1)(B) of the Karnataka Urban Development Authorities Act, 1976. The GBDA has since been designated as the "Greater Bengaluru Revised Local Planning Area," with steadily expanding jurisdiction and full urban planning powers. Similarly, the newly created GBA — replacing the BBMP — has been assigned all planning responsibilities previously held by the BDA and is empowered to prepare the next Master Plan for Greater Bengaluru.

Sanchari Cauvery reshapes city's tanker-driven market

Treated-water distribution strengthening public control over tanker market, reducing price fluctuations, improving quality assurance, and reshaping consumption patterns citywide

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Bengaluru, long dominated by private water tankers, has witnessed a sharp shift in control. In just six months, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board's Sanchari Cauvery scheme has turned into a major revenue generator, supplying 99.1 million litres of treated Cauvery water and earning ₹2.5 crore. For a city where tanker dependence was once near-total, especially in rapidly growing outskirts, the shift marks a significant redistribution of both demand and money.

GPS-tracked tankers boost trust, pricing stability and timely delivery

Private monopoly shifts

Launched on May 9 this year to provide affordable, certified water to households without Cauvery pipeline access, Sanchari Cauvery deployed 160 GPS-tracked tankers with fixed rates: ₹660 for 4,000 litres, ₹700 for 5,000 litres, ₹740 for 6,000 litres and ₹1,290 for 12,000 litres. With 24,743 bookings between May and November 20, the initiative directly challenged private tankers long known for fluctuating rates and uncertain water quality.

Zone-wise revenue (May 9–Nov 20)

East:	₹1,46,37,560
South:	₹68,77,500
North:	₹28,33,400
West:	₹9,60,570

East Zone leads

A BWSSB official said more than half of all bookings—13,023—came from the East Zone, home to many of the 110 newly added peripheral villages still waiting for pipeline connections. The South and North zones recorded 6,637 and 3,889 bookings respectively, while the West saw only 1,194. Online bookings reached 13,842, with demand from apartments, real estate developers, industries, and hotels.

Reliable public supply

Officials say residents trust the quality assurance private tankers could never provide. Daily supply ranges from 150 to 180 loads, ensuring delivery within 24 hours of booking and reducing dependence on costlier alternatives. Even with shrinking private tanker dominance, demand remains high enough that many areas continue to rely on them during peak shortages. As Bengaluru expands faster than pipelines can reach, Sanchari Cauvery has emerged not just as a stopgap but as a profitable public-sector pivot in a tanker-ruled marketplace.

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Sidewalk neglect

Yemalur

The footpath near Yemalur Junction on Marathahalli Main Road is in a state of disrepair, posing inconvenience and safety risks to pedestrians.

Garbage overflow

Banashankari

Piles of household and construction waste have accumulated near the BSNL office in Banashankari. Streetlights are faulty, and cleaning is urgently required.

Safety risk

Palace Ground

The footpath opposite Palace Grounds has been neglected for over a year, causing inconvenience to pedestrians and posing safety concerns.

THE SUNDAY READ

Steal deal

From AI-generated fake e-commerce sites to deepfake videos impersonating well-known brands or influencers, cyber criminals try to cash in on Black Friday rush

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Open any social media platform, and it's impossible to miss the flood of Black Friday deals dominating your feed. However, experts have cautioned that cyber crooks can use this storm of deals to trap victims. Cybersecurity experts advise customers to stay alert as heavy discounts tend to draw in online shoppers in their millions. Cybercriminals are exploiting the rush with sophisticated digital scams targeting those hunting for deals.

The Black Friday sale, which began on November 28 and will run until December 1, marks the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season. Traditionally observed in the United States after Thanksgiving, the event has now gained widespread popularity in India, driven by massive discounts and aggressive promotions.

From e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Myntra, and Savana to fitness brands such as Cult, a wide range of businesses are offering attractive deals to draw shoppers. However, the surge in online transactions has also opened the door for cybercriminals, tempting them to take advantage of time and to exploit unsuspecting buyers through digital scams.

Chetan Anand, National Cyber Security Scholar and Cybercrime Intervention Officer, explained that such events and festive seasons show a surge in fraudulent activities, ranging from AI-generated fake e-commerce websites to deepfake promotional videos impersonating well-known brands and influencers. Scammers are using targeted ads on social media platforms, redirecting users to malicious websites designed to capture personal data, payment information, and login credentials, he said.

"Many of these scam websites mimic the look and feel of legitimate online brands with uncanny accuracy, thanks to generative AI tools. Inexperienced shoppers may find it difficult to distinguish real websites from fake ones, particularly when tempted by unrealistic discounts of 70-90% or urgency in time such as flashy countdown, misspelt or unusual URLs, check out pages that redirect to unfamiliar domains, generic layouts repeated across different stores, absence of verified customer support information," he explained.

Numbers speak for themselves

According to police data, this year 7,961 cases have been registered up to September 30. Across Bengaluru, on average less or more than 10 FIRs related to cyber fraud are being registered daily at the eight cybercrime, CEN police stations. A growing number of victims are being duped through online investment scams that promise high returns and involve transferring large sums of money to unknown individuals. Fraudsters are targeting users through fake trading apps, malicious APK links shared by strangers, counterfeit WhatsApp accounts, deceptive advertisements, and misleading online messages.

Cyber experts describe the trend as "the most advanced wave of online retail fraud seen during a holiday sale season". Chetan Anand added that cybercriminals are no longer only relying on spelling errors or poor design to lure victims. "Today's scams are polished, convincing, and often indistinguishable from the real thing without close inspection," he said.

"Scams linked to major sale events don't just occur through malicious APK links or social media ads, they also happen via phishing emails and fake delivery notifications," Chetan Anand urged. "With many people ordering gifts during this period, cybercriminals often impersonate leading courier companies to deceive users. The rise of artificial intelligence has made these tactics even more sophisticated, enabling scammers to create highly convincing Black Friday advertisements and videos on platforms like Instagram and Facebook. These promotional posts direct shoppers to fraudulent websites designed to steal personal and financial information," he added.

Experts recommend several precautions to avoid falling victim to such scams: Shoppers are urged to verify and ensure websites contain proper domain extensions. Security agencies also advise avoiding links shared through emails, WhatsApp forwards, or social media ads, as many phishing campaigns originate through these channels. Instead, users should type website addresses directly into their browser or use official apps.

With online shopping expected to reach record levels this season, authorities stress that awareness and caution are crucial. "As long as there are deals, there will be scammers," Chetan Anand advised.

> **"The surge in Black Friday deals is being exploited by cybercriminals using sophisticated Ai, creating polished, fake websites abd ads. Shoppers must be vigilant, verify URLs, and avoid links from unverified sources**
>
> Chetan Anand, National Cyber Security Scholar and Cybercrime Intervention Officer

SCAM ALERT

Fake sites

Copycat websites that mimic real retailers are flooding search results and social media, with new data from NordVPN showing fake Amazon websites jumping 232%, as per a CBS News report. Across major shopping platforms, fraudulent storefronts have surged 250%, creating a dangerous landscape for bargain hunters.

AI-powered sites

Once easily identified by poor grammar or clumsy layouts, today's fakes use AI tools to replicate logos, product photos and website designs. Dr. Megha Kumar, chief product officer at CyXcel told The Independent, "Fraudsters are targeting bargain hunters with increasingly sophisticated scams, sometimes crafted using AI, making them harder to detect." Kumar added.

Warning signs

Experts say extraordinarily low prices are one of the biggest red flags as legitimate retailers rarely offer prices 70%, 80% or 90% off, even during Black Friday. Abhishek Karnik, head of threat intelligence research at McAfee, said, "That's where they hook you, thinking that you're going to get this amazing discount, or you know, rush in for a Black Friday deal, and it's too good to be true," as quoted by CBS News.

Lookalike URLs

Cybercriminals typically register website addresses that look nearly identical to the real ones, but with slight misspellings or extra words.
Some examples of fake Amazon URLs identified by Consumer Affairs include:
amazn-deals.shop
amazon-black-Friday.online

Unusual payment methods

Another warning sign is any site pushing unusual payment methods such as wire transfers, Zelle, or special links to activate discounts.

Inflated prices

Some deceptions come from retailers themselves. Consumer watchdogs warn that certain companies inflate prices ahead of Black Friday so they can advertise steep discounts later. Price trackers like PriceLasso and camelcamelcamel can help shoppers check whether a sale is genuine.

How to stay safe

- Double-check website URLs
- Be sceptical of unexpected emails,texts or ads
- Avoid shopping on public Wi-Fi
- Monitor bank transactions closely
- If you clicked a suspicious link or made a purchase on a fake site, Consumer Affairs advises immediately changing your password, contacting your bank or card provider, and reporting the scam to the actual retailer.

–ET Online

City emerges as India's fastest growing equity market

Young Bengaluru workforce powering equity-first investment culture, fuelling rapid mutual fund expansion and redefining Southern India financial behaviour

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TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Tech salaries and SIP discipline propel Bengaluru into top equity investment league

Bengaluru's investors are making a clear statement: they prefer equities over traditional savings, and they're backing that preference with long-term SIPs, index funds and diversified equity schemes. This shift in investing behaviour has propelled the city to become India's third-largest equity mutual fund market, with ₹4.06 lakh crore in equity Assets Under Management (AUM) as of September 2025. With tech salaries, startup liquidity and strong digital adoption shaping everyday financial habits, Bengaluru is steadily challenging older investment hubs. Investment strategists said the numbers capture a deeper cultural change: "Bengalureans are showing remarkable discipline. SIPs have become a routine financial habit, and equity-led wealth building is now the default choice for the city's young professionals."

Bengaluru's big lead

The city holds a lead of over ₹1.1 lakh crore on Pune, nearly matches the combined AUM of Kolkata and Ahmedabad, and stands almost twice Chennai's and 2.6 times Hyderabad's equity assets while being more than six times larger than Vadodara and Jaipur. A mutual fund analyst said Bengaluru's numbers reflect a city in a different orbit, powered by a workforce.

AMFI's list places Mumbai at ₹21.18 lakh crore and Delhi at ₹9.27 lakh crore, while Bengaluru's ₹4.06 lakh crore puts it firmly ahead of other emerging centres

Why Bengaluru invests

Industry watchers say the city's demographic profile—young, salaried and digitally active—has pushed equity funds into the mainstream. "Fintech platforms, ESOP liquidations and a preference for long-term wealth creation are driving Bengaluru's MF surge. The city has embraced equity as a way of life," said an analyst, noting how investment choices have become more intentional and longer horizon–driven.

Impact on India

Analysts said Bengaluru's rise signals a shift in India's investment landscape, with equity participation moving beyond the traditional Mumbai–Delhi axis as knowledge-driven urban centres fuel the next wave of mutual fund growth. The city's investors are increasingly embracing global-style behaviours, low-cost index investing, disciplined SIPs and long-term wealth-building mindsets.

Fake-bill network collapsing as probe advances

| Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

The probe into the massive ₹250-crore fake-bill scam in Rajarajeshwari Nagar has intensified, with former civic officials and serving engineers now facing imminent arrest. After conducting raids across multiple offices, investigators seized large volumes of records that reveal how fake work bills were systematically created to siphon off public funds meant for local development works. A detailed examination of these documents enabled investigators to identify officers who directly approved the illegal payments. Following this, several officials were served inquiry notices, and a few are now on the verge of arrest as the case gathers speed.

Sensing rising pressure, two retired chief engineers and four serving engineers approached the special court seeking anticipatory bail. Their pleas were dismissed, with the court observing that the accused, being government officers, had the capacity to destroy documents or influence witnesses, and that the misuse of public funds demanded an uninterrupted investigation. With bail denied, the legal net around the officers has tightened further.

All six officers had served in the RR Nagar zone between 2010 and 2019 and allegedly authorised fake bills routed through an implementing agency to release ₹250 crore to favoured contractors, even though no actual work took place on the ground. Investigators said that central and state funds for development in 2019–20 were substantial, yet work orders were issued only in late 2019. By January 2020, contractors had already submitted fabricated bills, which were cleared without proper verification. Sources claimed that influential contractors and politicians were involved, with officials signing files while political figures allegedly issued verbal directions, making direct evidence against them difficult to obtain. Investigators are also examining possible kickbacks.

In an effort to conceal their actions, some officials reportedly destroyed key records at the RR Nagar office. However, raids at other offices recovered surviving work-order papers and fund-sanction documents linked to the scam. The investigation began after a complaint by a former elected representative, and with more evidence emerging, the ₹250-crore fake-bill racket appears to be closing in on everyone involved.

16 taluk archive staffers booked for aiding land mafia

A massive land-records scam has emerged in Anekal, with 16 taluk archive employees booked for allegedly colluding with land sharks to forge documents and illegally acquire government land. During scanning of legacy records under the Bhoosuraksha project, officials discovered fake entries in critical files, including original grant records, application and distribution registers, ILRR registers, land-reform files, handwritten documents, and Inam DC orders.

The Anekal Tahsildar confirmed the tampering, prompting the district administration to probe further. Preliminary scrutiny revealed deliberate manipulation, leading to FIRs against all archive staff who worked in the department over the past five years. Deputy Commissioner G Jagadeesh has ordered a probe into private individuals and organised groups suspected of running a structured fake-records racket. Investigators allege that the accused staff switched off power on second and fourth Saturdays to disable CCTV systems while forging documents, indicating premeditated efforts to hide evidence.

–BMB

Multi-level parking facility eases city congestion

Bengaluru's surging vehicle numbers have worsened traffic congestion, with limited parking forcing motorists to leave vehicles on roadsides, creating severe bottlenecks. To tackle this, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has instructed five city municipalities to identify designated parking zones and submit comprehensive lists for implementing a revenue-linked parking plan efficiently.

The initiative follows government-level discussions held two months ago in response to public complaints about chaotic vehicle parking across the city. Currently, towing has been suspended, with only vehicle number plates recorded for fines. Police and civic officials are now collaborating to frame clear parking zones and enforcement strategies after consulting senior DCPs.

Since towing vehicles are yet to be procured and enforcement remains limited, authorities are seeking GBA's structured solutions, including providing vehicles dedicated to clearing illegally parked ones.

Meanwhile, the Smart City project has completed a multi-level parking facility at Gandhi Bazaar to ease heavy roadside congestion in the commercial hub. The 22-crore structure includes 50 shops on the basement and ground floors, parking 124 cars across four levels, a lift, six toilets, stairways, and a tunnel-style rooftop, awaiting inauguration.

–BMB

City AI cameras rollout hits bureaucratic block

Bengaluru's ambitious plan to install AI-powered cameras on all GBA vehicles has hit an unexpected roadblock, thanks to senior officials wary of having their own movements recorded. The 3-crore project, designed to spot potholes, garbage piles, illegal banners, and construction debris in real time while automatically filing complaints with photos and videos, had already begun: tenders were issued, work orders rolled out in August, and the contractor delivered the first 30 cameras.

However, the rollout stalled after BBMP's dissolution and the launch of the new GBA-plus-five-city-corporation structure, with senior officers signaling they prefer not to have AI track government vehicles. Activists say the phased plan—starting with senior officials' cars, then juniors', and eventually all civic vehicles covering the city's 14,000-km road network—has slowed so much that the IT wing now plans to distribute the 30 cameras among the five city corporations, leaving their use discretionary.

"The system, capable of autonomously capturing civic issues and filing complaints directly to responsible officers, is now effectively in cold storage," alleged an activist, adding that Bengaluru's streets were ready for accountability, but top officials were not.

–BMB

Call it a truce, break idli together

Culinary diplomacy transforms everyday dining into strategic space for political discussions, consensus building, and managing complex leadership disputes effectively

Who doesn't like a nice spread? Food soothes frayed tempers and relaxes taut nerves, serving as a political and diplomatic tool in seeking consensus during troubled times.

When the Congress High Command asked Karnataka's two warring leaders to meet for reconciliation, or at least a temporary truce, the politically neutral "demilitarised zone" became the breakfast table.

Amidst their ongoing tussle reportedly aimed at occupying the Chief Minister's chair, incumbent Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar convened to break idli and share sambhar under their Central leadership's directive.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during a breakfast meeting at the Chief Minister's Cauvery Residence on Saturday

IN FOCUS
CM-DyCM meeting

Meetings for a meal together have often helped melt the ice, or provide clear indication of differences for further deliberation

Historically, the meal table has been an informal, yet powerful setting where leaders attempt to resolve disputes without the rigidity of formal assemblies. Such occasions, whether bilateral or multilateral negotiations, have helped melt the ice, or at least provided a clear indication of differences for further deliberation.

Like the INDIA bloc dinners that helped reaffirm Opposition unity and coordination, even if temporarily, these meetings are less about food and more about politics, signalling compromise, unity, and calming respective followers. Whether these lead to lasting solutions remains uncertain, but they illustrate how Indian politics uses everyday rituals to manage crises.

According to a New York Times article published two years ago, "Diplomacy Is Best Conducted at the Dinner Table." The piece noted, "People have connected over food and used meals for political ends for centuries. Historically, the dining table has been considered a neutral space where weapons are put aside, frank conversations held, consensus built, and agreements brokered. Egyptian Pharaohs, Greek and Roman leaders, Chinese emperors, and Russian Czars used the lure of food to expand their reach."

Political deals often unfold informally over shared meals, where food serves as a backdrop for negotiation, alliance-building, and conflict resolution. These gatherings allow leaders to soften tensions, build trust, and strike compromises away from the public eye.

In 1974, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna sought to manage communal tensions in Lucknow by inviting Shia leader Ashraf Hussain for truce talks. Over the years, Iftars became a staple of India's political calendar, showcasing political strength and serving as platforms to appease and forge alliances.

On several occasions, the absence or presence of a particular leader signals political stance. Samajwadi Party supremo Mulayam Singh Yadav often conveyed his position through accepting or refusing to break bread. Similarly, events hosted by CPI(M) leader Somnath Chatterjee and interactions with Harkishen Singh Surjeet, Sonia Gandhi, Amar Singh, and Ajit Singh demonstrated how culinary diplomacy influenced alliances, campaigns, and reactions over time.

Culinary diplomacy, or gastrodiplomacy, has consistently helped leverage political alliances, campaigns, and negotiations—whether for good or ill. **–IANS**

SOCIALTATTLE

WHAT'S TWEETING

A Bengalurean calls Bengaluru Authority's encroachment clearance drive 'bulldozer' action as unclaimed vehicles and carts get crushed and removed

Deepak Bopanna @dpkB... · 11h
Bulldozer action by GBA in Bengaluru,
unattended & unclaimed street cars a
other materials left on the footpath be
crushed & cleared using bulldozers in
central city corporation near indiranaj

Indian Infra Report
@IndianInfoguide
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Bengaluru airport has overtaken Mumbai airport in India's domestic air traffic rankings by handling 279 more domestic flights in Oct.
3:21 PM · 29 Nov 25 · 7,229 Views

Well, what do you know? Bengaluru airport has overtaken Mumbai airport in India's domestic air traffic rankings by handling 279 more domestic flights in October, posts @indianinfoguide.

A X user posts about the Bengaluru Innovation Report 2025 that reinforces the city's role in shaping India's emerging innovation economy

BANGALORE MIRROR MENTIONED

A X user posts BM story about public spaces set for a makeover by GBA

Vijeth Kumar @Kuma50531K... · 1d
Neighbourhood public spaces set for major GBA makeover - Bangalore Mirror
bangaloremirror.indiatimes.com

CLOSERHOME

Airbus A320s temporarily grounded amid safety alert

India, one of Airbus' largest A320 markets, is set to witness flight disruptions due to a software update addressing a potential safety risk. Intense solar radiation has been found to potentially corrupt flight-control data, prompting precautionary action globally.

IndiGo and Air India, operating over 350 A320 aircraft collectively, will temporarily ground affected planes for the software fix. The update is expected to take two to three days, with normal flight schedules likely resuming by Monday or Tuesday.

Airbus explained that newer aircraft can receive the update within half an hour, while older A320s require additional hardware changes, extending turnaround times. The company acknowledged operational disruptions and apologised for passenger inconvenience. "Analysis of a recent event involving an A320 Family aircraft revealed intense solar radiation may corrupt flight control data. We have worked with authorities to ensure the fleet is safe to fly," Airbus said. The Alert Operators Transmission issued globally will also be reflected in an Emergency Airworthiness Directive from the European Union Aviation Safety Agency. **–IANS**

Chennai-bound flights disrupted by severe weather

Nearly 300 passengers, including around 150 Tamilians travelling from Dubai to India via Sri Lanka, have been stranded at Colombo's Bandaranaike International Airport for three days after Cyclone Ditwah forced cancellation of multiple flights to Chennai.

Passengers reported inadequate access to food, water, and basic facilities as airport operations stayed disrupted due to severe weather. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin directed the Public Department Secretary to coordinate with the Indian Embassy in Colombo. State officials engaged with the Indian High Commission to ensure the safe return of Tamilians stuck in Sri Lanka and sought immediate assistance for those facing hardship at the airport. Meanwhile, India has expanded its humanitarian outreach to Sri Lanka, which has been severely affected by Cyclone Ditwah. An Indian Air Force C-130J carrying nearly 12 tonnes of relief material landed in Colombo as part of the ongoing Operation Sagar Bandhu. Earlier, Indian Naval Ships Vikrant and Udaygiri delivered 6.5 tonnes of dry and fresh rations along with essential supplies. The High Commission reaffirmed India's commitment to HADR and reiterated support for Sri Lanka under the Neighbourhood First policy. **–ANI**

INBRIEF

Measures deployed after gastroenteritis outbreak

A gastroenteritis outbreak was reported on 12 November 2025 at Falcon City residential complex in Vasavanthapura Ward under Bengaluru South Assembly Constituency. Following a resident's complaint, senior Health Department officials and a 20-member team inspected the complex. They found that the Apollo Clinic on-site had been treating three to four gastroenteritis cases daily since early October.

In response, four medical teams were deployed from 12 to 27 November to provide first aid, conduct medical camps, and offer health education. About 177 residents sought treatment in local and nearby hospitals. Authorities collected water samples from main sources, sumps, overhead tanks, and individual flats for testing at the Public Health Institute.

Apartment management has been directed to disinfect all water sources and storage units, ensuring compliance with WHO standards. On 20 November, MP Dr CN Manjunath and MLA M Krishnappa visited with civic officials to review the situation and advise residents on precautions. Residents have been asked to avoid gatherings.

Officials also investigated the death of an 8-year-old child with Nephrotic Syndrome and a bacterial infection, who had gastroenteritis symptoms before passing. **–BMB**

Soladevanahalli hostel shock: student found dead

A 19-year-old pharmacy student died by suicide at her paying guest accommodation in Soladevanahalli on Saturday afternoon. The deceased, identified as Vatsala, was a native of Hassan and a second-year B.Pharm student at a private college along Hesaraghatta Road.

The incident came to light around 2.30 pm when her roommates found her dead in her room. They immediately informed the paying guest owner, who alerted the police.

A team of police officials rushed to the location and shifted the body for postmortem. Preliminary investigation revealed no suicide note at the scene. Authorities are questioning her friends and hostel mates to understand possible stress factors leading to this extreme step. Her mobile phone has been seized for forensic analysis.

A case of unnatural death has been registered at Soladevanahalli police station, and the investigation is ongoing. **–BMB**

(If you or someone you know is struggling with suicidal thoughts, reach out to Tele-Manas helpline: 14416 or 1800-891-4416, SAHAI Helpline: 080-25497777)

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

PRINCESS FLOWER GLORY

Our reader shares a vivid image of the stunning Princess Flower in full bloom at a Munnar garden, its vibrant purple petals and elegant long stamens creating a striking contrast against the surrounding greenery. Captured at the peak of its beauty, the ornamental flower stands out as a reminder of nature's rich colours and quiet splendour

The picture was clicked by reader **NJ Ravi Chander**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Yelahanka residents endure chaos as civic works stall without progress

A year after works began near Raithra Santhe, unfinished roads, traffic disorder and agency silence leave commuters frustrated and daily life disrupted

More than a year after civic work began around Raithra Santhe and surrounding stretches of Yelahanka, residents say daily life has become an obstacle course marked by stalled projects, traffic disorder and zero clarity from civic agencies. What started as a promise of improved connectivity and upgraded roads has now turned into a long period of uncertainty, with no visible progress on the ground.

At the Raithra Santhe market, chaotic parking, uncollected garbage and unregulated vehicle movement continue to overwhelm both commuters and shopkeepers. Despite repeated complaints, residents say no enforcement measures have been taken. Many describe the market as nearly impossible to navigate, with no monitoring or basic upkeep. A long-time resident said the situation makes them feel as though they have been left to manage things on their own.

Compounding the frustration is the frozen white-topping project on the same stretch. The asphalt surface was removed last year, but only a rough, dusty and uneven track remains. Residents say the road has become hazardous for both motorists and pedestrians, particularly after dark. Daily commuters point out that dust exposure, crater-filled lanes and unpredictable traffic diversions have made routine travel exhausting. "The old road was dug up, and since then nothing has moved. We breathe dust every day and have to drive through craters. This is unacceptable," said Kavitha H, who uses the stretch regularly.

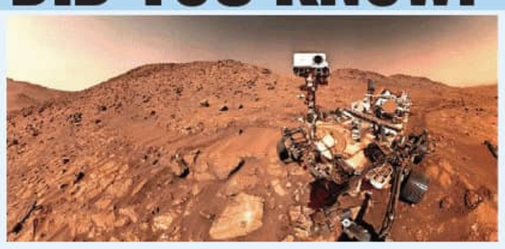
The sluggish progress of the Jakkur Railway Overbridge has added to commuter woes. The project, which took nearly a decade to move from proposal to execution, is now progressing at what locals describe as a "snail's pace." With no official communication on deadlines or reasons for the delays, residents fear the bridge may not open anytime soon. Many say the approach roads have become nearly as chaotic as the junctions the ROB was meant to decongest.

Citizens allege that the responsibility for the mess appears fragmented between multiple agencies, including BBMP, BWSSB, the ROB contractor PariChattha Constructions and JMC Contractors handling the white-topping. Local representatives have also offered no clarity on timelines. Even a visit by then BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath in August, following media coverage, has not changed ground conditions. Residents say the prolonged neglect has made everyday movement slow, risky and draining. "We do not need promises; we need work to restart. People are suffering daily," said resident activist Deepa Raman.

— BMB

Incomplete roads and open trenches pose safety risks for pedestrians and vehicles as residents wait endlessly for promised upgrades

DID YOU KNOW?



Scientists have likely detected lightning on Mars for the first time, thanks to a microphone aboard NASA's Perseverance rover that picked up faint crackles hidden within the planet's whirling winds. A French-led research team reports identifying 55 instances of "mini lightning" over two Martian years, mostly during dust storms and dust devils. These electrical arcs—just a few centimetres in size—occurred within two metres of the rover's microphone, producing static-like snaps as dust particles collided in the thin Martian air. The sounds were captured by an instrument originally meant to record the rover's laser blasts on rocks, making the discovery a fortunate accident. Scientists say the evidence is compelling, though based solely on audio data. Cardiff University researcher Daniel Mitchard, commenting in Nature, noted that while everything points to real Martian lightning, confirmation will require future missions with dedicated sensors. Electrical discharges on Mars can last seconds during dust devils or up to 30 minutes in storms. Though too weak to threaten future astronauts, these sparks could interfere with delicate instruments. — AP

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR
9591233247
Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

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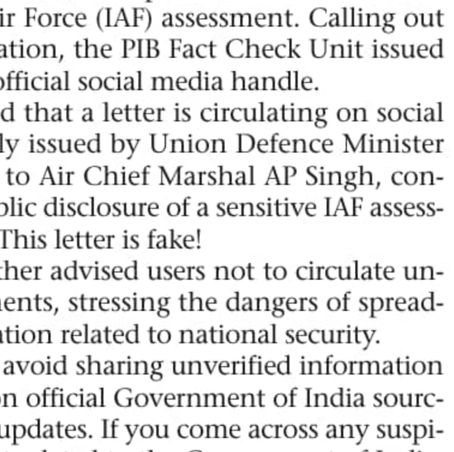
PIB debunks fake letter, warns against misinformation

Claim: A letter circulating on social media, allegedly written by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh, claims the minister criticised the public disclosure of a sensitive IAF assessment, suggesting internal concern and discord within India's defence establishment.



Fact: PIB Fact Check confirmed the letter is completely fake, warning users not to share unverified documents. Officials clarified no such communication was issued, stressing that misinformation targeting the armed forces is dangerous and urging citizens to rely solely on official government sources for accurate updates.

The Press Information Bureau's (PIB) Fact Check Unit has debunked a letter circulating widely on social media, purportedly written by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to IAF Chief, Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh.

The fake document claims the defence minister expressed concern over the public disclosure of a sensitive Indian Air Force (IAF) assessment. Calling out the misinformation, the PIB Fact Check Unit issued an alert on its official social media handle.

A post stated that a letter is circulating on social media, allegedly issued by Union Defence Minister @rajnathsingh to Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, concerning the public disclosure of a sensitive IAF assessment. Beware! This letter is fake!

The PIB further advised users not to circulate unverified documents, stressing the dangers of spreading misinformation related to national security.

It added, to avoid sharing unverified information and rely only on official Government of India sources for accurate updates. If you come across any suspicious document related to the Government of India, send it to @PIBFactCheck. The fake letter, dated November 22 and marked "Personal Confidential", appears to have been created to falsely suggest internal discord or concern within the defence establishment.

Officials reiterated that attempts to mislead the public through fabricated communications are a serious matter, especially when they involve the country's armed forces. The government has urged citizens to exercise caution and verify content before forwarding it, noting that misinformation campaigns targeting the defence sector have been on the rise.

Earlier, the Fact Check Unit of the PIB flagged a viral video of Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi as AI-generated and fake. The manipulated clip falsely claimed that 50 per cent of non-caste Hindu soldiers would be removed from the Army by 2028. PIB Fact Check clarified that the video was being circulated by Pakistani propaganda accounts to mislead citizens and create distrust against the Indian Armed Forces. The Government has earlier stated multiple times that it takes all possible actions to control the spread of fake and misleading information through the available statutory and institutional mechanisms.

— IANS

WHAT'S YOUR POISON?

Men's drinking harms women and children, impact is worst in poorer countries

Alcohol policies on priority

- reduce the availability and affordability of alcohol
- ensure no sale to persons under the legal drinking age
- limit marketing and advertising of alcohol, especially to children.

Drinking alcohol is known to be harmful to people's health. It's also known to be harmful in other ways.

For example, men experience more harm, such as aggression, accidents, and injury, from their own drinking than do women. But when a man drinks, the women and children closest to him often pay a price too.

I'm part of a global collaborative group of health researchers who set out to explore how – and how much – men's drinking harms women and children.

Our recent research drew on three global reviews of findings from rich, poor and middle-income countries. These covered harm to women, harm to children, and policy options for reducing harmful drinking by men. The reviews covered 49 studies and 11 reviews between 1990 and 2023.

What we found

The studies that were included in the three reviews show that men tend to drink more than women, and when they are alcohol-affected, they sometimes engage in harmful behaviours such as aggression and violence, disrupting family life, control and sexual coercion.

They are also frequently away from home, often in drinking spaces, or not prioritising the needs of women and children. When men spend household money on alcohol, there may not be enough left for food, school fees, or medicine. That, in turn, harms women and children.

Women reported that men's alcohol-related acts of violence and aggression included punching, kicking, burning and beating them.

But the effects of men's drinking are not always visible; many women told stories about the hidden harms they experienced as a result of having a drinking partner. They described their embarrassment and shame; self-isolation to avoid expected public humiliation; and a sense of loneliness from being associated with having a drinking partner. These stresses can lead to depression, insomnia, or even thoughts of suicide.

Children are affected too

When men drink alcohol, it can cause both direct and indirect harm to children. On the one hand, men can jeopardise the safety and well-being of their children by making them targets of, or witnesses to, their own violence.

Research has found that when children grow up in homes where there is violence, this places them at risk for a range of negative outcomes. Those can include poor school performance, low self-esteem and children themselves becoming perpetrators or victims of violence.

When there is fighting in the home, children become active or silent victims.

Studies in the reviews show that men's drinking can also lead to neglect and abuse of children. Children whose fathers drink heavily may not feel as emotionally close to them because they fear their fathers when they drink. And drinking might lead to more conflict at home, neglect of family duties, or growing apart.

Drinking is often considered to be a private issue, but alcohol use is influenced by many factors at the level of society, the community and the household.

For example, alcohol laws and policies affect the availability of alcohol, the number of alcohol outlets in neighbourhoods, and the age at which people can purchase alcohol. Drinking has an impact on well-being and safety in homes, communities and society.

We found that women and children in poorer countries suffer the worst from the effects of men's drinking because they have fewer resources. Also, both men's drinking and abuse of women are considered normal in poorer than richer societies.

What can be done

Governments and health authorities focus mainly on reducing harm to drinkers themselves. As a result, the policies, programmes and services in place are individualised.

While research has shown that drinkers can be helped through peer support programmes like Alcoholics Anonymous, or by seeking individual psychological support, including brief interventions, these programmes must occur within a social and policy environment that supports positive change, and one that takes a gendered lens.

Our study found that policies and programmes must consider the harms to others, especially women and children.

One way to do this is to pair alcohol interventions with community-based interventions that focus on harms that specifically affect women and children. A useful first step is to design interventions that raise awareness of alcohol misuse as a public health issue that affects women and children disproportionately, and combine these with treatment programmes and screening in primary care settings.

Declaring "dry zones" where alcohol use is prohibited is an additional tactic. Although some zones designate specific areas such as certain neighbourhoods, or entire states, or municipalities as dry, where alcohol sales are prohibited or where specific sales practices are restricted, these zones are typically concentrated on public areas like parks and roads.

(By Leane Ramsoomar, South African Medical Research Council, The Conversation)

New drug to bypass resistance in deadly childhood cancer

Researchers in Australia have identified a drug that can help overcome treatment resistance in relapsed neuroblastoma -- the deadly childhood cancer.

The discovery could improve neuroblastoma treatment -- the most common solid tumour in children outside the brain -- which currently claims nine out of 10 young patients who experience recurrence, Xinhua news agency reported

According to Australia's Garvan Institute of Medical Research, the drug combination can bypass the cellular defences these tumours develop that lead to relapse.

The team showed that the approved lymphoma drug -- romidepsin -- triggers neuroblastoma cell death via alternative pathways, bypassing blocked routes to improve chemotherapy-resistant cases in children.

Researchers found standard chemotherapy drugs rely on the JNK pathway "switch" for cell death. In relapsed tumours, this switch has often stopped working, meaning treatments are no longer effective.

The findings made in animal models showed that romidepsin combined with standard chemotherapy halts tumour growth via alternative cell-death pathways, bypassing the blocked JNK pathway common in resistant cases.

The combo reduced tumour growth, extended survival, and allowed lower chemo doses, potentially reducing side effects for young children, according to the findings published in Science Advances.

"Finding a way to overcome the resistant state of relapsed high-risk neuroblastomas has been a major goal for my lab," said David Croucher, Associate Professor at the Garvan Institute.

"These tumours can be highly resistant to chemotherapy – and the statistics once patients get to that point are devastating for families," he added.

Romidepsin is already approved for use in other cancers and has been tested for safety in children, which could potentially accelerate the development of the drug as a new treatment option for neuroblastoma. **—IANS**

Use ambulance to bring Sabarimala devotees' mortal remains: Kerala HC

The Kerala High Court on Saturday was "shocked and dismayed" that mortal remains of devotees, who died during pilgrimage to Sannidhanam in Sabarimala, were transported to Pamba on stretchers and directed that it be discontinued forthwith and an ambulance be used instead.

The High Court said that an ambulance shall be used to transport the remains to "prevent hardship and distress" to other pilgrims using the trekking path and to "ensure dignity and respect to the deceased at all stages". A bench of justices Raja Vijayaraghavan V and K V Jayakumar issued the direction following a report by the Sabarimala Special Commissioner highlighting the need for an ambulance to transport mortal remains of deceased devotees from Sannidhanam to Pamba.

The Special Commissioner had said that presently remains of devotees, who die due to cardiac arrest during their pilgrimage, are transported from Sannidhanam to Pamba on stretchers.

"Such practice causes significant distress and discomfort to the relatives of the deceased devotee and other trekking pilgrims," he told the court. He further told the court that an old ambulance was stationed at Pamba and it can be used for transporting the remains. **—PTI**

Air pollution: 'Need solutions which work throughout year'

Amid worsening air pollution in the national capital, health experts on Saturday emphasised the need for solutions that work throughout the year, and not for a short period.

Delhi's air quality remained entrenched in the very poor category for the 15th consecutive day, with the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) recording an Air Quality Index (AQI) of 338 at 7 a.m.

"We have reached an emergency in Delhi. The efforts to curb pollution cannot be only temporary, which may help immediately for a little while, but long-term solutions to this city are urgently required," Dr. Anant Mohan, Professor and Head, Department of Pulmonary Medicine and Sleep Disorders, AIIMS New Delhi, told IANS. "We have to do something very urgently on this now at this stage," he added. The city's 24-hour average AQI on Friday stood at 369, extending Delhi's persistent run of very poor air quality through half the month.

Forecasts from air-quality and weather agencies indicate that conditions are unlikely to undergo any significant improvement over the coming week, as meteorological factors remain largely unfavourable for the dispersion of pollutants.

"We talk about pollution when November and December come, and those three months we are very active. We are thinking there is so much in the media, but even in the summer, the air quality is not good. Air quality remains suboptimal as compared to the global standards, even when the weather is fine," said Dr Saurabh Mittal, Department of Pulmonary Medicine, AIIMS Delhi. **—IANS**

Broken sanitary napkin vending machine tells tale of neglect

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

functioning just fine last year. It has been defunct for many months now. I appeal to the authorities concerned to take measures to repair at least the vending machine," said Latha S, a BMTC commuter.

Vinod Jacob, a civic activist, said while it was commendable that such a shelter was built, the need to maintain such facilities can't be overstated. "It is encouraging to see many new initiatives and modern bus stations coming up. But the real value of such public infrastructure lies in how well we maintain it and keep it operational. Time and again, we've seen bus stations, toilets, and skywalks built at great public expense only to fall into disrepair. There must be regular audits of these assets and clear accountability for their upkeep," he said.

Poornima Shetty, social inventor, creative strategist, and founder director of Iron Feather Foundation said the condition of the 'smart bus stop' at KR Circle is a disgraceful display of neglect. "While the city invests in modern amenities like the sanitary pad vending machine, the basic maintenance is utterly absent, the accumulation of garbage just a few feet from where citizens wait is a clear sign that these public facilities are being installed, but not sustained. A smart bus shelter is only truly helpful to the citizens if it is clean, usable, and well-maintained. We urge the authorities to take immediate corrective action," said Shetty.

When contacted, Pundalika, General Manager, Elpro Energy, said the Smart Bus Stop constructed by Elpro Energy was handed over to the BBMP more than a year ago. "We have constructed three Smart Bus Stops for the BBMP, now the GBA, in the city. The other two Smart Bus Stops are constructed at Koramangala and Kadubeesanahalli. The sanitary pad vending machine was in good condition when the Smart Bus Stop was handed over to the BBMP. The authorities have to take measures to maintain the machine, the general manager said.

The Bengaluru Central City Corporation Chief Engineer assured BM that the problem will be fixed. "I will ask the engineer to visit the spot. The problem will be fixed and measures will be taken to keep the surrounding of the bus shelter clean and neat," he said.

Defunct Sanitary Pad Vending Machine

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Commercial Site SALE
BTM
BTM Layout

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Shady SIM scam

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Police officials argue that the root of the problem lies in public demand for cheaper products. Many buyers, students, migrant workers, gig workers, and undocumented laborers opt for these SIM cards due to convenience, lack of documents, or faster activation. The official explained, "Earlier when we had to buy BSNL SIM cards, we used to wait for a longer time like around six months for activation, but now everything is fast paced. A SIM card today is not just a phone connection. It is linked to banking, digital identity, and personal data. A misuse can destroy someone's financial life."

What happens after the data is stolen?

In a few cases, once a person's data is stolen, fraudsters use it to pretend to be the victim. They contact the victim's mobile service provider through customer care or by visiting a store. Acting as the real owner, they claim that their phone is lost or damaged and request a new SIM card or try to move the number to another device they control. They use stolen personal details to answer verification questions.

After the request is approved, the victim's original SIM stops working, and the attacker now controls the phone number. The victim suddenly loses network connection. The fraudster then starts receiving all calls and messages, including OTPs and password reset links. This allows them to break into banking accounts, emails, social media, and other important accounts, leading to financial loss and identity theft.

According to police records, the misuse of unverified SIM cards has been linked to crimes including online banking fraud, phishing, impersonation, ransomware communication, extortion, drug trafficking, and even anti-national activities. In several cases, SIM cards were found registered in the names of unsuspecting citizens who had never applied for them.

"Official telecom stores follow strict KYC rules, including biometric verification, which helps prevent fraud. However, many street vendors ignore these rules, making it easier for criminals to buy SIM cards using stolen or false identity documents," an official said.

In India, the person whose name is registered on the SIM card can be held legally responsible if that SIM is used for criminal activity even if they never used it. A recent advisory from the Department of telecommunication states that any SIM Connection used for fraud, threats, impersonation, cybercrime, money laundering, VoIP masking or any unlawful activity will make the original subscriber equally responsible in the eyes of law- irrespective of who was physically operating the SIM.

Police officials stress on some safety measures to ensure the SIM is registered in your own name: Avoid SIM box usage, and never share or lend your SIM card, check for unauthorised SIMs issued in your name on the Sanchar Saathi portal.

Your Connect

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personal

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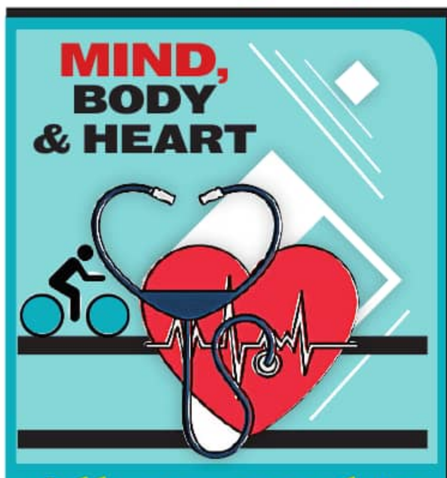
I, Usman Shariff Ameerulla S/o Ameerulla Shariff R/o # 30 4th Main Road 17th Cross Lakkasandra Bangalore 560030 have changed my name to Usman Shariff

I, Santhosha Naregadde Upendra s/o Upendra, R/o #241 off Kanakapura Main Road 5th A Block, 9th Phase JP Nagar, doddakallsandra, B'luru-560062 Have Changed my Name to Santhosh Kuke Upendra for all Purposes.

I, Jeyakumar Narayanaswamy R/o No.66, 1st Main, 2nd Cross, Muneshwaranagar,Subramanya -pura Po, Bengaluru 560061 have changed my name to Jeyakumar Narayanasamy. I shall be called by this name for all purposes

I, R. Karthik S/O Raju R/o # Raju, 5th Ward, Yallamma Temple, Kayisoppina Beedhi, Ramanagar-562159 have changed my name to Karthik for all purposes.

I, Nisha Karthikeyan Nair W/o P Karthikeyan R/o C-203 No 12 1st C Main Road lakshmi Devi Enclave Ganganagar B'lore-560032 have changed my name to Nisha Nair



All you need to know about...

Dandruff

Flaky issue

Tired of seeing flakes on your shoulders or constantly scratching your scalp in public? Dandruff can be frustrating but it doesn't have to control your hair days. With the right remedies, you can calm irritation, banish stubborn flakes and bring your scalp back to balance.

Here are some ways to control dandruff.

Aloe vera gel

Aloe vera is a natural and soothing solution for a flaky, itchy scalp. Its cooling properties help calm irritation and reduce redness, while its mild antimicrobial action keeps the scalp clean without stripping away essential oils. Applying fresh aloe vera gel directly to the scalp for 20–30 minutes before washing helps moisturize dry patches, loosen dead skin, and reduce flaking. Over time, regular use strengthens the scalp's natural barrier, relieves itchiness and promotes healthier hair.

Use scalp exfoliant

A scalp exfoliant helps remove dead skin, oil build-up and stubborn flakes that regular shampoo often can't lift.

Anti-dandruff shampoo

Anti-dandruff shampoo works to control dandruff recurrence by soothing inflammation, balancing oil production and improving hair vitality. With consistent use, it leaves the scalp feeling nourished and flake-free, offering long-lasting relief and promoting a healthier scalp environment that supports strong and shiny hair.

What causes dandruff?

Dandruff is often caused by a dry scalp, excess oil, or fungal growth.

How often should I use anti-dandruff shampoo?

Use 2–3 times a week or as recommended for your scalp condition.

Can home remedies really help dandruff?

Yes, ingredients like aloe vera or tea tree oil can soothe and reduce flakes.

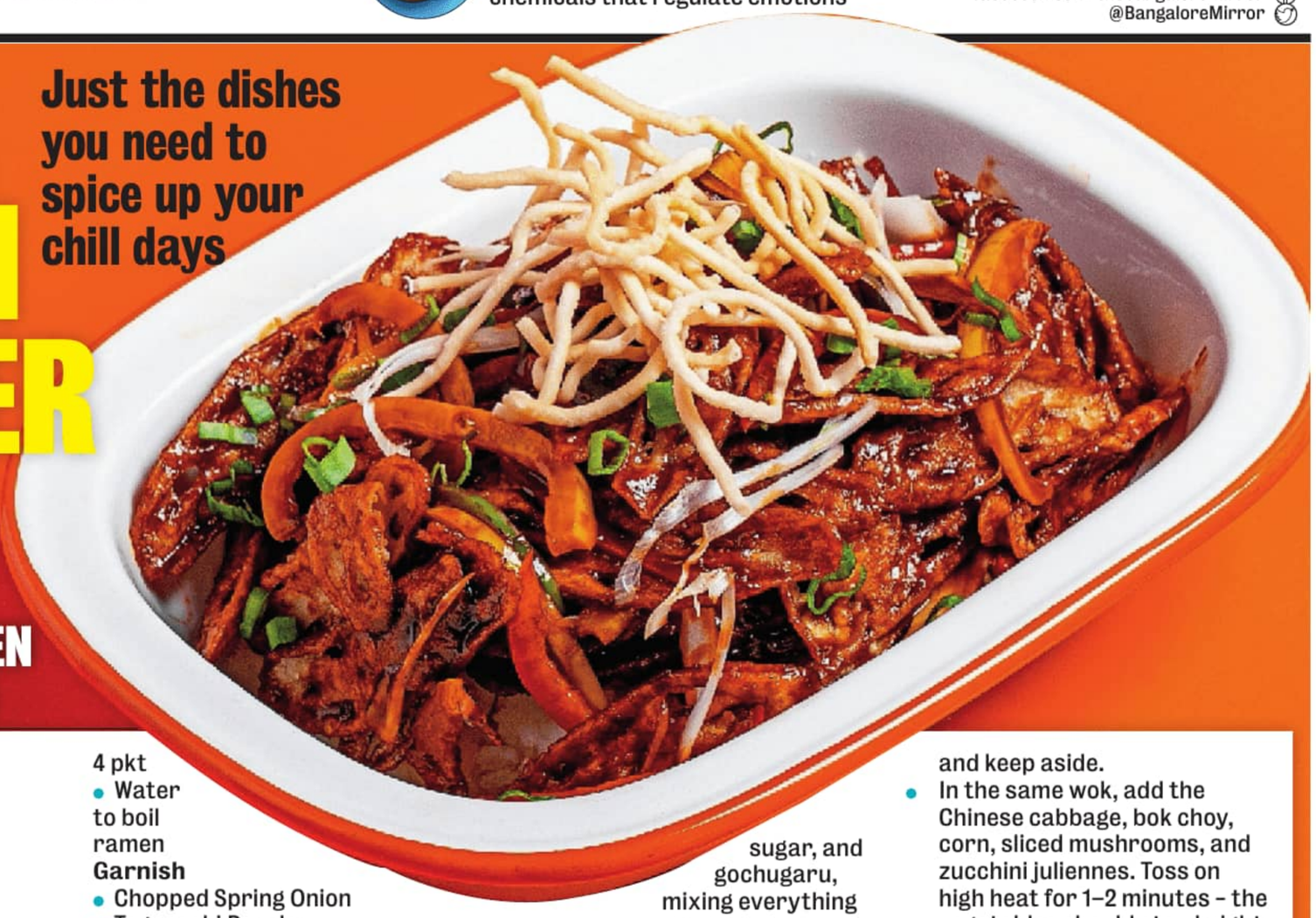
Do conditioners worsen dandruff?

Not if you use lightweight, scalp-friendly conditioners; they actually help balance the scalp.

— Femina

COSY, WARM WINTER BITES

Just the dishes you need to spice up your chill days



STIRFRY RAMEN (VEGETARIAN)

INGREDIENTS

- Gochujang Sauce
- 1. Oil for cooking – 1 tbsp
- Garlic, chopped – 1 tbsp
- Gochujang Paste – 3 tbsp
- Tomato Ketchup – 2 tbsp
- Light Soy Sauce – 1 tbsp
- Sugar – 1.5 tsp
- Gochugaru –1 tsp
- Water – 2 to 3 tbsp

Stir Fry Vegetables

- Cooking Oil – 6 tbsp
- Diced Tofu – 40 pcs
- Roughly chopped Chinese Cabbage – 4
- Half Bok choy – 12 nos
- Boiled American corn – ¼ cup
- Sliced Button Mushroom – 12 nos
- Julienne cut Zucchini (green & yellow – ½ cup
- White Pepper powder – 1 tsp

Prepare Ramen

- Shin Ramen Noodle (Nongshim) – 4 pkt
- Water to boil ramen

Garnish

- Chopped Spring Onion
- Togarashi Powder
- Fried julienne cut Nori
- Toasted Black and white sesame

METHOD

Gochujang Sauce

- Begin by gently warming a tablespoon of oil in a small saucepan over low heat. Add the chopped garlic and let it soften for 30–40 seconds, just until it releases its aroma – avoid browning to keep the flavours clean.
- Stir in the gochujang paste and cook it slowly for a minute; this helps it open up and deepen in flavour. Add the tomato ketchup, light soy sauce, sugar, and gochugaru, mixing everything into a smooth, rich base.
- Pour in 2–3 tablespoons of water and let the sauce simmer on low heat for another 2–3 minutes until it turns glossy and thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Set aside.

Ramen

- Cook the ramen according to the packet instructions until just done. Strain well and keep aside, allowing the noodles to stay bouncy.

Stir Fry vegetables

- Heat oil in a wok over medium heat. Add the diced tofu and pan-fry until lightly golden on all sides; remove and keep aside.
- In the same wok, add the Chinese cabbage, bok choy, corn, sliced mushrooms, and zucchini juliennes. Toss on high heat for 1–2 minutes - the vegetables should stay bright, crisp, and vibrant.
- Return the tofu to the wok, season with white pepper and a touch of salt, and toss everything together.
- Add the cooked ramen along with the prepared gochujang sauce. Toss on high heat for a few seconds until the noodles are evenly coated and glossy.

Finishing

- Serve the ramen hot in a deep bowl. Garnish generously with spring onions, a sprinkle of togarashi, fried nori, and toasted sesame seeds for flavour, aroma, and texture.

MAKHANA CHAKANA

INGREDIENTS

- Phool Makhana (Fox Nuts) – 4 cups
- Whole Cashew Nuts – 1 cup
- Cooking Oil – 7 tbsp
- Ghee – 4 tbsp
- Fresh Curry Leaves – 10–12
- Peanut Podi Powder – 150 g
- Salt – as preferred

Garnish

- Lemon Wedges

METHOD

Toast the Cashews

- Begin by heating the oil in a wide pan over medium heat.
- Once the oil is hot, add the cashews and fry them gently until they turn golden and crisp.
- Lift them out using a slotted spoon and set aside.

Roast the Makhana

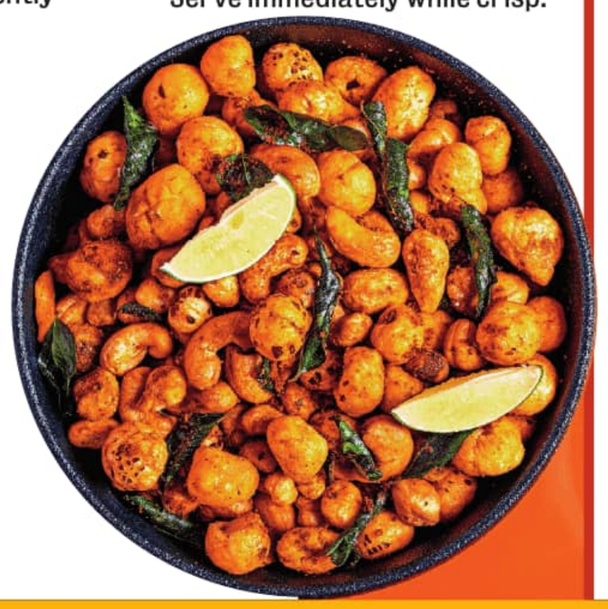
- Reduce the heat, add 2 tablespoons of ghee to the same pan, and tip in the makhana.
- Roast them slowly for 5–7 minutes, stirring often, until they feel light, crisp, and slightly golden.
- Transfer to a large mixing bowl.

Season and Toss

- Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of ghee to the pan. Drop in the curry leaves and sauté them for 30 seconds until fragrant.
- Stir in the peanut podi powder and salt, allowing it to warm through for 30–60 seconds without burning.
- Return the roasted makhana and fried cashews to the pan. Toss gently so everything gets evenly coated in the podi mixture.

Garnish and Serve

- Transfer to a serving bowl and garnish with lemon wedges. Serve immediately while crisp.



K-KRISPY LOTUS STEMS

INGREDIENTS

- Thinly sliced Lotus Root – 4 cups
- Corn Flour – 8 tbsp
- Sunflower Cooking Oil – 200 ml
- Kung Pao Sauce – 6 tbsp
- Schezwan Sauce – 6 tbsp
- Manchurian Sauce – 6 tbsp
- Finely chopped Green Chillies – 2–3
- Medium sliced Red Onion – 1
- Medium sliced Green Capsicum – 1
- Medium sliced Red Capsicum – 1
- Medium sliced Yellow Capsicum – 1
- White Sesame Seeds – 1 tsp
- Chopped Spring Onions – 2–3

Garnish

- Chopped Spring Onions
- Fried Noodles

METHOD

Prep the Lotus Stems

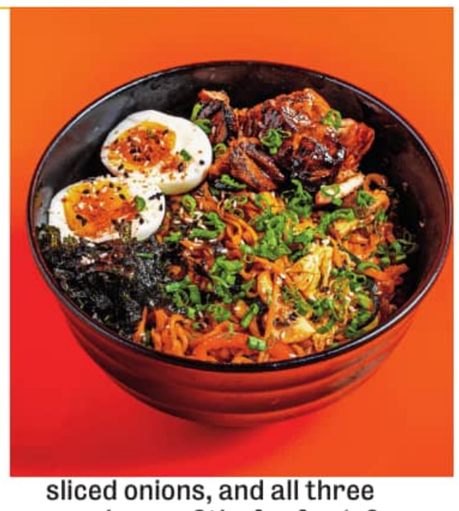
- Wash and peel the lotus root thoroughly, then slice it into thin, even rounds.
- Pat the slices dry so they fry well. Coat them lightly in corn flour, shaking off any extra.
- Heat oil in a deep pan.
- Fry the lotus stem slices in batches until they turn uniformly golden and crisp. Drain on paper towels and keep aside.

Stir-Fry the Veggies

- Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a wok over medium-high heat.
- Add the chopped green chillies, sliced onions, and all three capsicums. Stir-fry for 1–2 minutes, keeping the heat high so the veggies stay bright and crunchy.
- Lower the heat and add the Kung Pao, Schezwan, and Manchurian sauces. Stir briefly for 30–45 seconds until the sauces come together.
- Add the fried lotus stems and toss quickly so they absorb the sauce but remain crisp.

Finish: Sprinkle in the sesame seeds and chopped spring onions. Toss one last time and take off the heat.

Serve: Move to a serving dish. Garnish generously with spring onions and crisp fried noodles. Serve immediately.



Recipes by Chef Sourabh Arora, Regional Executive Chef – South, SOCIAL

Red carpet moment— Rajinikanth had a special moment with his fans at the 56th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2025 when he stopped to pose for photographers, during the screening of 'Lal Salaam', directed by his daughter Aishwarya Rajinikanth

All about resilience

How SRK found inner strength to carry on through life's difficult chapters

Shah Rukh Khan has long been celebrated not just for his superstardom, but for the inner strength that has carried him through some of life's most difficult chapters be it the demise of his parents to most recently his films not working which made him take a four year sabbatical before returning with films like Pathaan, Jawan and Dunki. In a clip that is now doing the rounds of the internet, the actor reveals what made him so resilient, be it his life or his career.

In a candid reflection during the time he was hosting "TED Talks India: Nayi Soch, Shah Rukh shared, " When life gives you a lot more than you think you deserve. It humbles you. It makes you believe that there are so many other people who are better than me, are more talented than me. or perhaps even ten times more hardworking than me. But some of us, sometimes, through good or bad things happening in our lives, and I don't want to romanticise the fact that I was young, I was an orphan, my parents died, no, that's gone and behind now, they happened to us, for a reason. And you have to accept both with humility, not with victimhood. So to me, everything that happens to me is a chance to do things better with all the humility I have, and thank God and Allah and Bhagwan and everyone, for the fact that I got the strength through my weaknesses to keep going on and on and on."

Shah Rukh Khan recently turned 60 and he brought in his birthday with his friends and family at his Alibaug bungalow as his Bandra bungalow is under renovation. He is now gearing up for his next release King which will be his first film with his daughter Suhana Khan.

—ETimes

Dramatic story of ghosts in trouble

GST

3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆

- **DIRECTOR** ASrujan Lokesh
- **ACTORS** Srujan Lokesh, Rajani Bharadwaj, Girija Lokesh, Sharath Lohitashwa, Vinaya Prasad
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 131 minutes

Actor Srujan Lokesh, who debuted as a hero in Sandalwood with Neela Megha Shyama in which Radhika Kumarswamy played the female lead in 2002, turns director with the movie GST. The title is a little confusing and it has nothing to do with Goods and Service Tax (GST). It is about the stories of ghosts in trouble and each one is loaded with sentiment, emotion, and greed. Srujan Lokesh deserves a pat on the back for not only handling the megaphone with aplomb but also aptly selecting the appropriate cast for this movie. Though Srujan himself plays the lead, he has given equal importance to all actors, including his mother Girija Lokesh and son Sukruth.

The movie begins with Lucky (Srujan Lokesh) attempting to end his life at a burial ground. While he was wondering why he could not end his life, five ghosts Shanthamma (Girija Lokesh), Prabhakar (Tabla Nani) and his son (Sukruth), Hanumanthu (Vinod Gobbagaragala), and Tanya (Nivedita Gowda) appear before him. These ghosts tell Lucky how they foiled his suicide attempts. They ask him why he wanted to end his life. In a flashback, we are told how Lucky was considered unlucky by his father (Ashok) due to some reasons. Lucky's mother (Vinaya Prasad) died after giving birth to him. His father incurs a huge loss. After listening to his pathetic story, the ghosts decide to help him to meet his sweetheart Nidhi (Rajani Bharadwaj). He decides to help the ghosts accomplish their unfulfilled obligations. You have to watch the movie to know whether or not Lucky succeeds in his mission.

The movie has all ingredients to entertain the audiences. The post-intermission session makes audiences have a hearty laugh. All the actors, especially Ravishankar Gowda, Sharath Lohitashwa, and Shobraj, have acted well. It is worth a watch for families.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

FLIRT

3.5 RATING ★★★½☆

- **DIRECTOR** Chandan Kumar
- **ACTORS** Chandan Kumar, Kiccha Sudeep, Nimita Ratnakar, Girish Shivanna, Akshita Bopaiah, Vinay Gowda, Sadhu Kokila, Avinash
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 164 minutes

A funny romance

Actor Chandan Kumar, who was seen in the movies Parinaya and Prema Baraha, debuts as a director and producer in Sandalwood with this movie in which he also plays the lead. And it is appreciable that he has pulled off all these roles effectively. He meets audiences' expectations though it is his maiden movie as a director by peppering the film with humour and racy dialogues.

The movie takes off well with a group of media persons interviewing an advocate (Sadhu Kokila). Later the scene shifts to a court where Krishna (Chandan Kumar) faces a trial for sexually assaulting Manya (Akshita Bopaiah). Krishna voluntarily confesses that he not only did that, but also flirted with 99 girls. At this juncture, the director introduces a flashback narrating how Krishna, a workaholic and introvert, fell in love with Saniha (Nimita Ratnakar) and how he lost his job and how Saniha avoided him and he suffered with mental illness. You have to watch the movie to know whether or not Krishna recovers from his mental illness.

The pre-intermission session is full of comedy, punchy and witty dialogues. The court scene, especially dialogues between veteran actress Shruthi and actor-cum-director Sadhu Kokila, will leave the audiences in splits. Both deserve appreciation for agreeing to play such characters in the movie. Kiccha Sudeep's special appearance in the song sequence – Nee Nanna Jeeva – adds value to the movie. Avinash and Rangayana Raghu are good supporting characters. Girish Shivanna plays a different character in the movie.

Jessie Gift has scored some lilting music and Nakul Abhyankar has done a fantastic job with the background music that give the film a touch of drama, romance, quirk, and haunting vocalisation.

Chandan Kumar is at his best in the role that has two shades. Nimitha Ratnakar looks gorgeous. Akshita Bopaiah has acted well. Cinematographer HC Venu has done an excellent job behind the camera.

The movie's only problem is its runtime, which seems to stretch 20 to 25 minutes too long.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

Kareena's Friday night goes retro with 'Grease'

Bollywood diva Kareena Kapoor Khan spent her Friday night with a sprinkle of Hollywood charm, setting in to watch the evergreen musical "Grease" starring John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John.

Kareena took to her Instagram stories, where she shared a screenshot from a still from the iconic finale of the 1978 film "Grease", where Travolta and Newton-John dance together. She captioned the post: "Friday movie night. IYKYK."

Grease marked the directorial debut of Randal Kleiser and was based on the 1972 stage musical of the same name by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey. The plot follows greaser Danny Zuko and Australian transfer student Sandy Olsson, who develop an attraction for each other during a summer romance. Grease was successful both critically and commercially, becoming the highest-grossing musical film at the time. A sequel, Grease 2, was released in 1982, starring Maxwell Caulfield and Michelle Pfeiffer as a newer class of greasers.

Kareena is currently shooting for 'Daayra'.

—IANS

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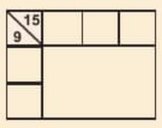
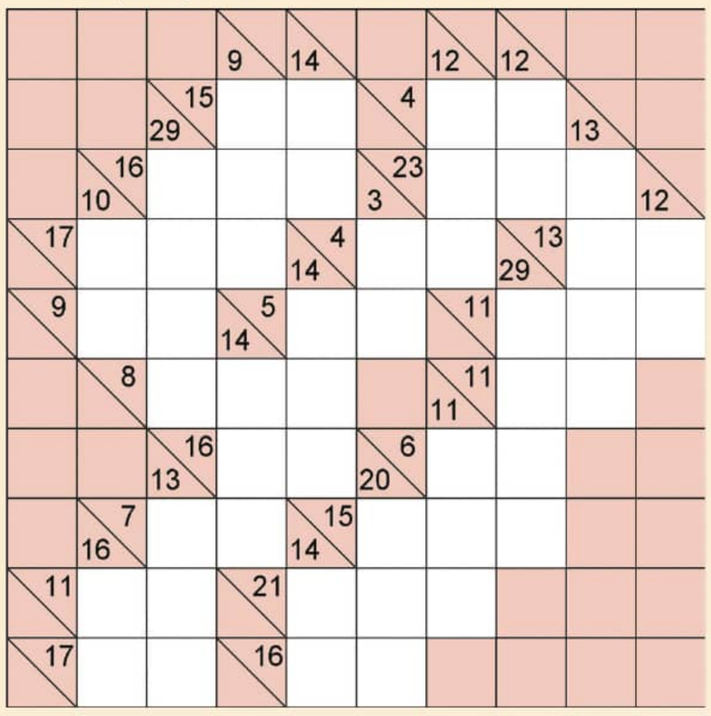
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

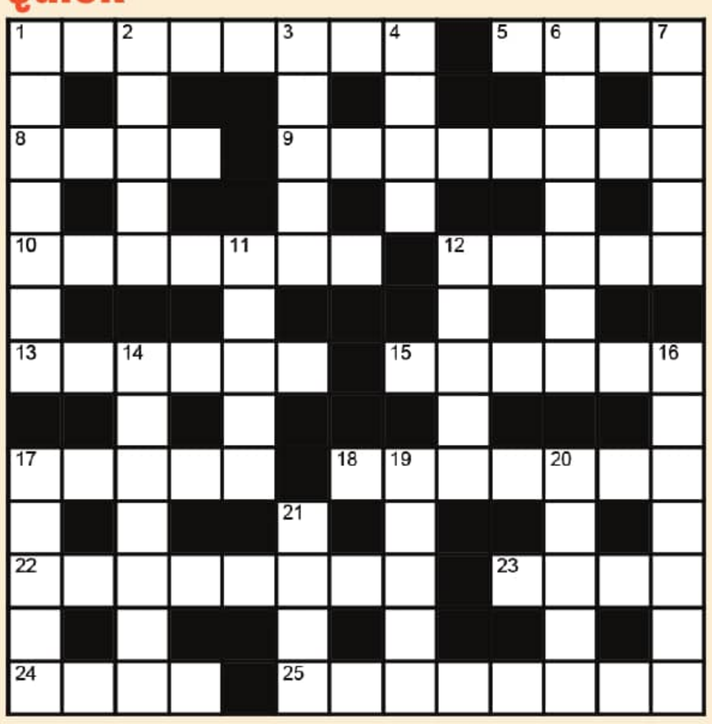
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Getting confused completely, taking one for the other? (6,2)
5 Chamarajpet has a church dedicated to this saint (4)
8 Genuine (4)
9 Disease caused by thiamine deficiency (8)
10 Caught by a rope with a noose (7)
12 Mine finds (5)
13 Over there (6)
15 A marine barker! (6)
17 Efts (5)
18 Royal rod (7)
22 Obliged (8)
23 A pocket case for pins and needles (4)
24 The abominable snowman (4)
25 Not in a workers group (3-5)

DOWN

1 Ethically (7)
2 Diagnostic aids for orthopaedists (1-4)
3 Pointed end of house (5)
4 Scrape off outer layer or skin of (4)
6 Upset or altered drastically, in a way? (7)
7 Gives out (5)
11 Follows orders (5)
12 Vassal or subject of a ruler (5)
14 Inasmuch as; since? (3,4)
16 Style of architecture (7)
17 In a stately and aristocratic manner (5)
19 Arthur ___ Doyle : creator of Sherlock Holmes? (5)
20 All together, musically? (5)
21 Arabian gulf (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: U EQUALS G

NKSX LOI O EZPFXTJHA EOV ZJ ILZEKPU HI ELON TXOAAV SONNXTI.

Linemaro

Your name must be Google, because you have everything I am looking for

Mindchow

The books that the world calls immoral are the books that show the world its own shame

Joke of the day

I have just received my degree in Calcium Anthropology...the study of milkmen

Loop

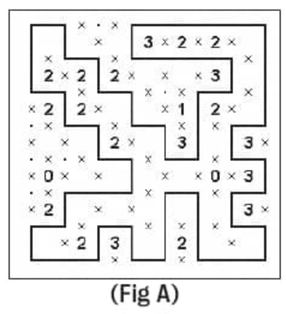
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

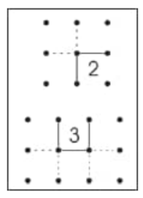
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

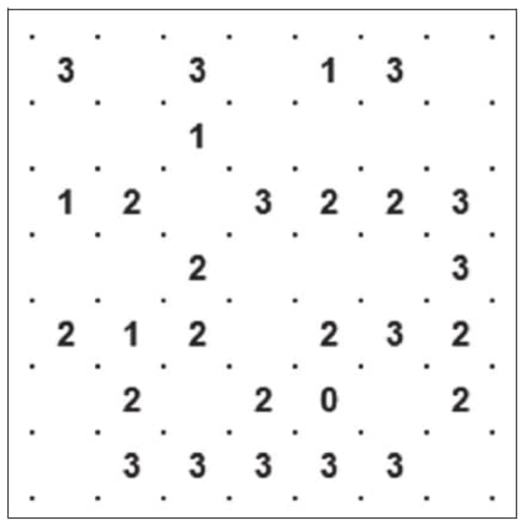
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



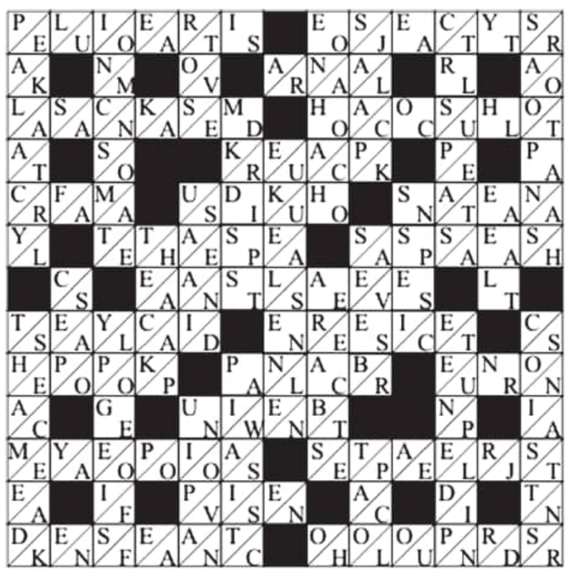
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6				
7				
8				
9				Y

ACROSS

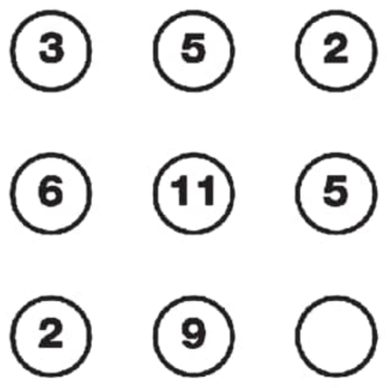
1 Cures; 6 Ernst; 7 Cutis; 8 Atoms; 9 Yo PPP

DOWN

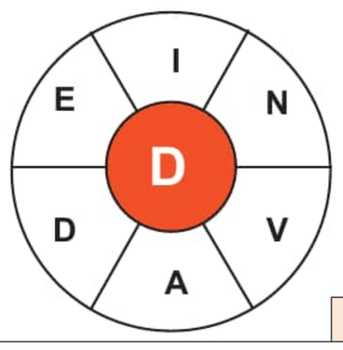
1 Scrip; 2 Or etc; 3 Ton-up; 4 Tumps; 5 As yes

Mensapuzzle

Which number is missing?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

13 Average; 15 Good; 17 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

2								7
	4						8	
8		7	1	3	2	4		5
		2	7		9	6		
			5		1			
		6	3		4	8		
4		1	2	9	6	3		8
	7						9	
6								4

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 6

2 3 5 6

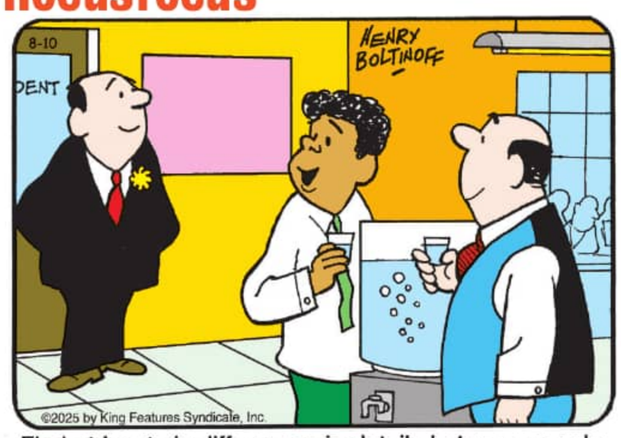
Medium = 21

3 3 6 6

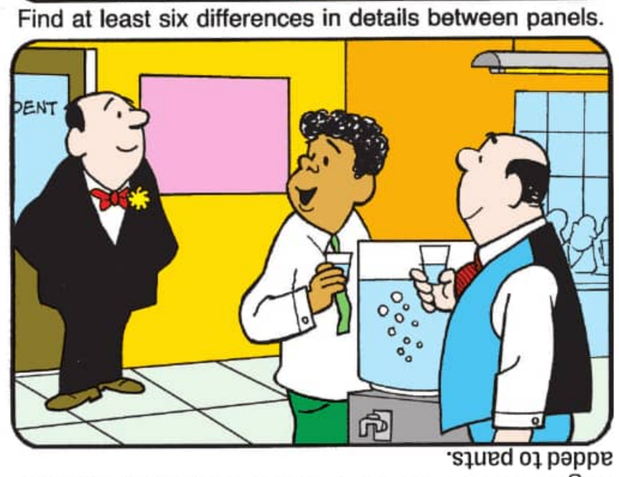
Hard = 8

1 5 7 4

Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



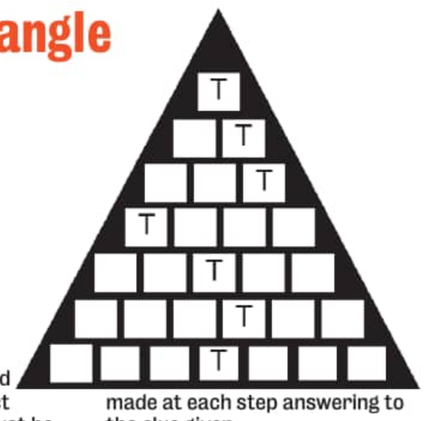
Differences: 1. Tie is shorter. 2. Cup is larger. 3. Arm is longer. 4. Tie is a bow tie. 5. Nose is different. 6. Pocket is added to pants.

Riddler

If E times ILE equals BANISH, and TE times T equals BOOK, what does TO times IN equal?
A. BREATH B. TEASER C. RUTABAGA D. POISON E. COPPER

Alpha triangle

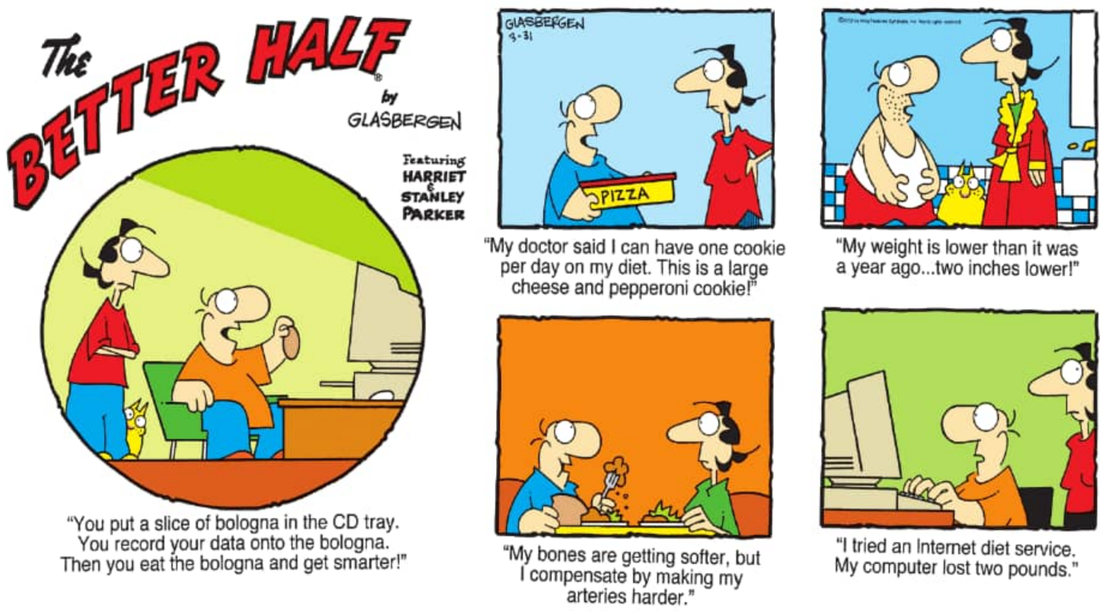
1 Terabyte
2 Pronoun
3 Take a chair
4 Affiliations
5 Locations
6 A nun
7 Rouses



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"You put a slice of bologna in the CD tray. You record your data onto the bologna. Then you eat the bologna and get smarter!"
GLASBERGEN
PIZZA
"My doctor said I can have one cookie per day on my diet. This is a large cheese and pepperoni cookie!"
"My weight is lower than it was a year ago...two inches lower!"
"My bones are getting softer, but I compensate by making my arteries harder."
"I tried an Internet diet service. My computer lost two pounds."

BABY BLUES
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
PHHHU!
PHHHOO!
MAN, I WISH I COULD WHISTLE!
IT'S EASY.
BUT THERE'S A CERTAIN WAY YOU SHOULD PRACTICE.
TELL ME!
SO, THEN YOU STUFFED A BUNCH OF CRACKERS IN YOUR MOUTH AND TRIED TO WHISTLE IN MY FACE?
PTHT!
THE INSTRUCTIONS WERE PRETTY SPECIFIC.

FLASH GORDON
FLIGHT LOG: WINDCRAFT 33Z
CRAFT DEPARTS DESERT SMUGGLER SETTLEMENT ["BORROWER'S FIRTH"]
PASSENGER GORDON GRIPS EDGE OF BOARDING BAY, ATTEMPTING ENTRANCE
ENTRANCE: SUCCESSFUL
PAS. GORDON NOTICES DISRUPTION FROM SETTLEMENT
FLIGHT LOG (CONT.)
DEPARTURE INTERRUPTED BY BLAST FROM SURFACE ENERGY WEAPON ["GALVANIC CUTLASS"]
REAR THRUSTER 2 DAMAGE: SIGNIFICANT
PASSENGER GORDON TAKES CONTROLS
PAS. ARDEN GIVES PAS. ZARKOV ITEM PAS. ARDEN STOLE FROM SETTLEMENT ["ENTROPY EGG"]
PAS. ZARKOV INTEGRATES EGG INTO THRUSTER LINES
AIRSPEED INCREASE: EXPONENTIAL
PURSUERS: IRRELEVANT
PAS. ZARKOV'S SCANNER LEADS TO VALKRIAN JUNGLE
ENGINE MODIFICATIONS LEAD TO ENGINE FAILURE
CRASH ENSUES
PAS. GORDON EXECUTES EMERGENCY LANDING. TOTAL CRAFT DAMAGE: 23%
DAMAGE INCLUDES: FRACTURE TO PAS. ZARKOV'S LEFT FEMUR
PAS. GORDON AND PAS. ARDEN CONTINUE INTO JUNGLE ON FOOT
MISSION IMPORTANCE: SUPREME
PASSENGER RETURN LIKELIHOOD: UNCLEAR
NEXT: THE WILDERNESS

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Your natural optimism attracts great career opportunities and consistently boosts your finances. Love is full of joyous laughter and exciting shared adventures; prioritise keeping the fun alive. Family relationships expand and deepen successfully through shared exploration and travel. This year is strongly marked by luck and personal expansion.

Aries Mar 21–Apr 20

Avoid driving today. Work feels light after recent progress. Family discussions could spark tension, but calm communication resolves it. Spend quiet time with your partner to restore harmony and peace.

Taurus Apr 21–May 20

Prioritise rest today. Step away from routine and give your mind space to recharge. Explore learning something new at work to expand skills and refresh creativity effectively.

Gemini May 21–Jun 21

Try new experiences outside your comfort zone. Focus on current assignments instead of chasing promotions. Growth comes with patience; consistent effort now leads to long-term career success later.

Cancer Jun 22–July 23

Don't dwell on past regrets. Celebrate your progress and reconnect meaningfully with someone from the past, but stay cautious emotionally; move slowly before forming deep attachments again.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

Release worries about missed chances. Focus on upcoming opportunities instead. Meditation or quiet reflection helps clear anxiety and restores calm when your thoughts feel overwhelming.

Virgo Aug 24–Sep 23

Love approaches; decide carefully if it's worth pursuing. Professionally, take bold risks and trust your instincts. Courage and initiative today pave the way toward future promotion opportunities.

Libra Sep 24–Oct 22

Diffcult choices arise at work. Prioritise family harmony and manage finances carefully; avoid unnecessary spending. Children admire your strength and will look to you for guidance today.

Scorpio Oct 23–Nov 22

Creative inspiration flows today. Channel it into learning a new skill. Attend to minor health concerns early and give parents extra attention; they'll appreciate your presence deeply.

Sagittarius Nov 23–Dec 22

Seek mental peace through meditation. Though work feels heavy, you'll handle it gracefully. Misunderstandings in love resolve soon, and reconnecting with old friends brings unexpected joy.

Capricorn Dec 23–Jan 20

Your energy soars; channel it into productive work. Attend lovingly to your spouse's needs. Property investments look promising, and financial conditions favour significant, well-planned spending decisions.

Aquarius Jan 21–Feb 19

Avoid impulsive spending today; focus only on necessities. Students may struggle to concentrate, so rest if needed. Promising new job offers or career prospects could emerge soon.

Pisces Feb 20–Mar 20

Chaotic situations settle down today. Work demands diligence, but your boss will acknowledge your dedication. Family conversations about children's education and parents' health may require attention.

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SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

= $(16\sqrt{5})^{48}$
= $5^{48/16}$
= 5^3
= 5 x 5 x 5
= 125

RIDDLER

POISON. Replace every instance of the word "times" with an X.

STRIKE OUT

D	E	F	E	A	T	■	H	O	U	N	D	S		
E	■	F	■	P	I	E	■	A	■	I	■	T		
M	Y	O	P	I	A	■	S	T	E	E	R	S		
A	■	G	■	N	W	E	B	■	N	■	A	■		
H	O	O	K	■	A	L	A	R	■	U	N	O		
S	A	L	A	D	■	E	R	E	C	T	■	C		
■	S	■	E	N	S	L	A	V	E	■	L	■		
Y	■	E	T	A	P	E	■	A	P	S	E	S		
R	A	M	■	S	I	K	H	■	S	T	E	N		
T	■	O	■	R	U	C	K	■	E	■	A	■		
L	A	C	K	E	D	■	O	C	C	U	L	T		
A	■	N	■	O	■	R	N	A	■	R	■	A		
P	L	I	E	R	S	■	E	J	E	C	T	S		

FAST FIVE

C	R	U	S	E
R	E	N	T	S
I	C	T	U	S
S	T	O	M	A
P	O	P	P	Y

QUOTE UNCODE

Time has a wonderful way of showing us what really matters.

QUICK

M	I	X	I	N	G	U	P	■	L	U	K	E		
O	■	R	■	A	■	A	■	P	■	M	■	■		
R	E	A	L	■	B	E	R	I	B	E	R	I		
A	■	Y	■	L	■	E	■	N	■	■	■	T		
L	A	S	S	O	E	D	■	L	O	D	E	S		
■	L	■	■	B	■	■	■	E	■	■	■	■		
Y	O	N	D	E	R	■	S	E	A	D	O	G		
O	■	■	■	Y	■	■	■	G	■	■	■	R		
N	E	W	T	S	■	S	C	E	P	T	R	E		
B	E	H	O	L	D	E	N	■	E	T	U	I		
O	■	T	■	A	■	O	■	■	■	U	■	C		
■	T	■	■	■	A	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Y	E	T	I	■	N	O	N	U	N	I	O	N		

MENSA PUZZLE

7. Working in rows, the central number equals the sum of the left and right hand numbers.

BULL'S EYE

aide, aided, avid, dead, dean, died, dine, dined, diva, divan, dive, dived, idea, invade, INVADED, vend, vied

SUDOKU

2	6	5	9	4	8	7	3	1
1	4	3	6	5	7	9	8	2
8	9	7	1	3	2	4	6	5
5	3	2	7	8	9	6	4	1
9	8	4	5	6	1	7	2	3
7	1	6	3	2	4	8	5	9
4	5	1	2	9	6	3	7	8
3	7	8	4	1	5	2	9	6
6	2	9	8	7	3	5	1	4

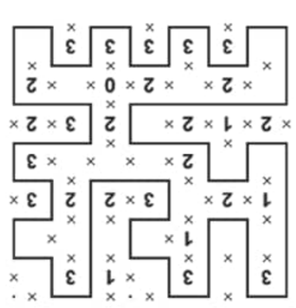
ALPHA TRIANGLE

T, It, Sit, Tiles, Sites, Sister, Bestirs.

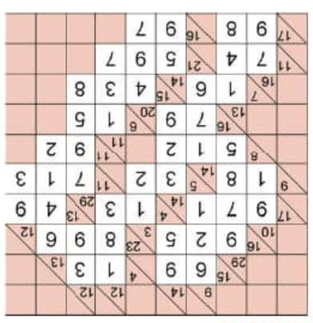
GO FIGURE

2–5 + 6 + 3 = 6
Easy
6 x 3 + 6–3 = 21
Medium
5–4 x 1 + 7 = 8
Hard

LOOP



KAKURO



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Language hiccup

Vishal Jethwa reveals why he had the jitters going to Cannes

Actor Vishal Jethwa on Saturday said he was initially reluctant to go to the Cannes Film Festival with his film "Homebound" as the fear of communicating effectively in English language on a global stage loomed so large that it even overshadowed his excitement.

Directed by Neeraj Ghaywan, the film is inspired by journalist Basharat Peer's The New York Times article "Taking Amrit Home". It portrays the childhood friendship between a Muslim (Ishaan Khatter) and Dalit (Jethwa) who chase a police job that promises them the dignity they have long been denied due to their surnames.

Jethwa recounted his personal struggles with the English language during a session at the 15th IFP, the multi-disciplinary creative festival being held at Mumbai's Mehboob Studios.

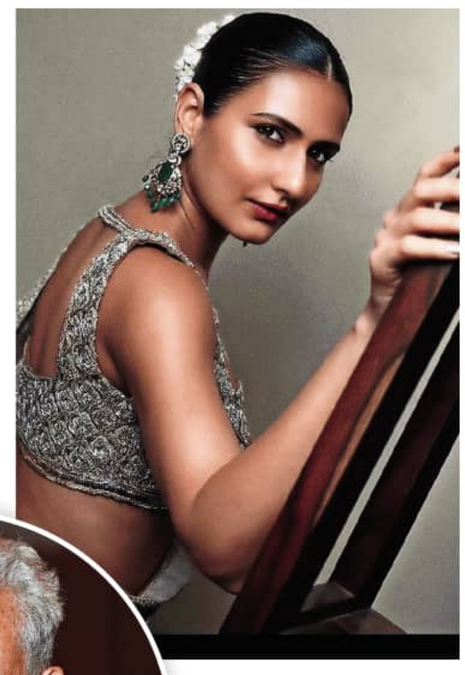
"I took one thing from Chandan, accepting your identity. This is such a universal topic. It's everywhere. All of us, somewhere or other, are not able to accept ourselves completely. I used to have a lot of fear before, and it was such a level of fear that I used to be afraid to talk in front of people, because I couldn't speak English very well. I would wonder, how would I present myself in front of people," said the actor.

"Homebound", which also stars Janhvi Kapoor, garnered wide acclaim when released in theatres in India and also at film festivals like Cannes and Toronto International Film Festival.

"…The fear of (not being fluent in) English (language) was of such a level that when we were going to the Cannes film festival I thought, 'Let me not go to Cannes, and that's okay for me'. That was because I thought my contemporaries, Ishaan (Khatter), Janhvi (Kapoor), Neeraj sir (Ghaywan) and Karan sir (Johar), know everything, and I don't know anything," Jethwa said.

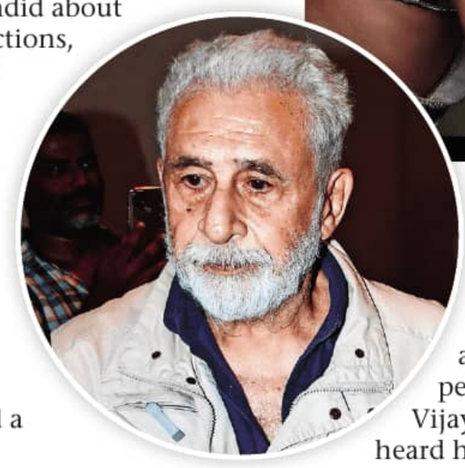
—PTI

'An institution'



Actress Fatima Sana Shaikh was recently at the IFP Season 15, held in Mumbai. The actress, while in a session, elaborated on her working experience with the legendary Naseeruddin Shah in her recently released movie 'Gustaakh Ishq'.

In an engaging conversation over 'Bringing Back Old-School Romance', Fatima, along with her 'Gutsaakh Ishq' co-star Vijay Varma, got candid about flaws, imperfections, and conflict in love and relationships.



Fatima, while in a conversation, called Naseeruddin Shah "inherently a teacher".

She recalled a memory that captured the mix of fear and admiration that came with performing opposite him, sharing, "I was actually very worried he would judge me. There was this one scene where I had to cry, and he did something really small, but it changed the whole moment. He placed my hand on his pulse so I could feel the heartbeat, basically telling me to be in the moment. What really empowered me was Naseer Sir saying, 'It's okay. Feel it. You don't have to hit those beats perfectly.'"

When asked how Naseeruddin Shah's energy and presence shaped the atmosphere on set and fed into their performances as actors, Vijay expressed, "Have you heard him? It sounds like God is talking to you directly. He has got that baritone, that voice that comes from somewhere else. It sounds like the voice of the universe."

She added, "Like Morgan Freeman is the voice of God in Hollywood, and we have Naseeruddin Shah as the voice of God. I mean, his grip over the languages -- Hindi, Urdu, English, even Punjabi, and Parsi... he is so good with so many different dialects. He is an institution."

—IANS

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